



**EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY
EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND CONFLICT
RESOLUTION**

**TO ASSESS THE MEASURES INSTITUTED BY THE PARTNER STATES FOR THE
SAFETY AND SECURITY OF MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE AND GOODS ON LAKE
VICTORIA AND TANGANYIKA**

(8th -11th March 2022)

Clerk's Chambers

EALA Headquarters, 3rd Floor

EAC Headquarters

Arusha – TANZANIA

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABADR	Association Burundaise des Agences en Douane et Transitaires
AFDB	African Development Bank
ASALAC	Association des Amateurs du Lac
CCTTFA	Central Corridor Transit Transport Facilitation Agency
COLREG	Convention International Regulations for Preventing collisions at Sea
DFID	Department for International Development
FDNB	Force-Burundi National Defence Force
LL	Load Lines
LVBC	Lake Victoria Basin Commission
LVFO	Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRCC	Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre
MLVMCT	Multinational Lake Victoria Maritime Communication and transport
OSBPs	One- stop border posts
RV	Research Vessel
SOLAS	Safety of Life at Sea
STCW	Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping
SAR	Search and Rescue (SAR)
TASAC	Tanzania Shipping Agencies corporations
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Force

TABLE OF CONTENT

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	4
2.0	OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY.....	5
3.0	METHODOLOGY	5
4.0	KEY FINDINGS FOR THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA.....	6
5.0	FROM THE KEY FINDINGS REPUBLIC OF UGANDA.....	11
6.0	KEY FINDINGS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI.....	18
7.0	GENERAL OBSERVATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	23
8.0	CONCLUSION.....	24

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Lake Victoria is Africa's largest lake and the world's second largest fresh water lake by surface area. It is the main reservoir of River Nile, with the Lake shared between Tanzania 51%, Uganda 43% and the remaining 6% in Kenya. Lake Victoria contributes to the economies through fish exports, agriculture, tourism to mention but a few. It also provides employment opportunities in direct fishing, infrastructure and transportation activities hence a source of income for millions of people surrounding or doing business on the Lake.

Lake Tanganyika on the other hand is one of the world's natural attractions and the deepest Lake in Africa. The states around the lake are; Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania and Zambia. The Lake shores are endowed with fertile soils and minerals.

Although Lake Victoria and Tanganyika are vital for economic growth as well as a source of livelihoods for several people, as waterways, they have become risky with preventable accidents in which many lives perish annually. Government authorities in the EAC region attribute these accidents on overloading, bad weather, negligence, poor mechanical condition of boats, ships and ferries, shortage of life jackets and other rescue equipment.

Environmental management on and around the lake is of a concern. The water hyacinth has been a menace on Lake Victoria. The weed is both a hazard to migration and fish growth. Pollution on Lake Tanganyika has also grown to worrying extremes.

These challenges affect movement of people and goods in the Lake region. It is against this background that the Committee on Regional Affairs and Conflict Resolution undertook an oversight activity to assess the measures instituted by the Partner States to ensure safety and security with regard to the movement of people and goods on Lake Victoria and Tanganyika and to ascertain if there exists appropriate legal, regulatory and policy frameworks and efficient mechanisms to combat security challenges on EAC shared inland water bodies

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY

The objectives were as follows;

- i. To assess security and safety threats with regards to free movement of people and goods on Lake Victoria and Tanganyika;
- ii. To understand the mechanisms employed to curb the security challenges on the EAC shared inland water bodies.
- iii. To assess existence of joint surveillance measures for safety, security and rescue on Lake Victoria and Tanganyika;
- iv. To understand mechanisms in place to control and reduce illegal fishing, pollution and environmental degradation.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

During the Oversight activity, the Committee Members on Regional Affairs and Conflict Resolution were divided into three groups, each group comprising of six members and covering the Republic of Burundi, Republic of Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania and interacted with the stakeholders responsible for the safety and security on the movement of people and goods on Lake Victoria and Tanganyika. The teams were comprised of the following Members:

United Republic of Tanzania

- i. Hon. Amb. Fatuma Ndangiza **-Team Leader**
- ii. Hon. Fancy Nkuhi
- iii. Hon. Dr. Anne-Itto Leonardo
- iv. Hon. Gideon Gatpan
- v. Hon. Aburi Mpuru
- vi. Hon. Josephine Lemoyan

Republic of Burundi

- i. Hon. Victor Burikukiye **-Team Leader**
- ii. Hon. Dr. Ngwaru Maghembe
- iii. Hon. Adan Noor
- iv. Hon. Dr. Pierre- Celestin Rwigema
- v. Hon. Mo- Mamo Karerwa
- vi. Hon. Christopher Nduwayo

Republic of Uganda

- i. Hon. Rose Akol Okullu **-Team Leader**
- ii. Hon. Dr. Oburu Oginga
- iii. Hon. Alex Bahati
- iv. Hon. Gabriel Alaak
- v. Hon. Mary Mugenyi
- vi. Hon. Chris Opoka Okumu

4.0 KEY FINDINGS FROM THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

In the United Republic of Tanzania, sub-committee Members interacted with various stakeholders and also visited various sites in Mwanza region as follows;

Stakeholders

- Representatives from the Ministry in Charge of EAC affairs;
- Representatives from Lake Victoria Basin Commission;
- Representatives from the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries;
- Representatives from the Immigration department of Tanzania;
- Representatives from the Ministry of Water;
- Officers from Tanzania Shipping Agencies Corporation (TASAC);
- Courtesy Call to the Regional Commissioner;

Sites

- Field visit to Songoro Marine Transport Ltd;
- Field visit to the EAC Research Vessel (RV) Jumuiya;
- Field visit to the South Port Mwanza;

The City of Mwanza is located on the Southern part of Lake Victoria and is Tanzania major port on the Lake. Fish export and transport are the key foundations for Mwanza's economy. Safety and Security concerns on Lake Victoria pose a major threat to the free movement of people and goods in the region. Trade within the Lake basin area relies heavily on Lake transport implying that any disruption impacts negatively on the People's safety and livelihood.

4.1 Threats to sustainable development of Lake Victoria basin

- Deforestation
- Pollution (industrial wastes, domestic wastes, oil spillage, pesticides)
- Climate change
- Rapid population growth that leads to over exploitation of the Lake

- Accidents that claim over 5000 lives each year

4.2 Challenges on Lake Victoria

- Increased number of marine accidents and deaths due to hazardous weather conditions, unseaworthiness of vessels, lack of updated navigational charts, lack of safety awareness and safety gears, overloading and poor seamanship
- Notable marine accidents in Lake Victoria involving large vessels include capsizing of MV. Bukoba (1996) and Mv. Nyerere (2015).
- Maritime security threats on Lake Victoria which include illegal fishing, theft of fish from fish cages, illicit drugs, illegal immigrants as well as pirates.
- Poor port infrastructures and landing sites

4.3 Past initiatives or solutions for Maritime transport

- Installation of 86 Aids to navigation equipment in the Lake Victoria in the three Partner States to ensure safety of navigation i.e 18 in Kenya, 22 in Uganda and 46 in Tanzania;
- Enactment of the Lake Victoria Transport Act (2007) and its regulations namely safety regulations (2010) and fees regulations (2010);
- Gazettement by the Council of EAC Ministers of the Tel. number 110 as an emergency call to be used on and around Lake Victoria for search and rescue operations;
- Formulation of the Regional Lake Victoria Oil Spills and Toxic Chemicals Contingency Plan. This plan is aimed at guiding actions that should be taken incase an accident occurs that spills toxic chemicals or oils into the Lake;
- Purchase of oil spill handling equipment and
- Improvement of port infrastructure under Lake Victoria Transport programme and regional economic integration projects.

4.4 Proposed initiatives or solutions

- Need for a comprehensive maritime security strategy and action plan for Lake Victoria;
- Need to identify and formalize many unregulated ports across Lake Victoria for easy monitoring;
- Need to establish one- stop border posts (OSBPs) across main ports in the Lake Victoria;
- Re-survey of the Lake to obtain updated navigation charts; and
- Update or amendment of existing Lake Victoria Transport Act 2007.

4.5 Courtesy call to the Regional Commissioner

The Regional Commissioner of Mwanza Eng. Robert Gabriel Luhumbi welcomed the Subcommittee members and noted that more emphasis has been put on security on the Lake. This has been done through the provision of a network that has been extended to 10km with a dial of (110) in case of an emergency and also existence of communication centers around the Lake.

He further informed the Committee that the United Republic of Tanzania provided a plot of land where the headquarters of the Communication house will be set and this is being facilitated by the project called Multinational Lake Victoria Maritime Communications and Transport project. Project funds of (USD 36.5 million) were approved by African Development Bank though there has been delays in the implementation. The Regional Commissioner appealed to EALA Members to urge the Partner States to pay much attention to the protection of the Lake.

4.6 Field visit to Songoro Marine Transport Ltd

The Committee visited Songoro Marine Transport Limited company and was informed by the Chief Executive Officer that it undertakes major ship building and ship repairing. The Company was incorporated in November 1993 under the ordinance cap 212. The initial objective of the company was transportation of passengers and cargo by boats between Mwanza gulf and villages surrounding the South – East of Lake Victoria, in Tanzania.

The Boatyard was originally owned and managed by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania jointly sponsored with the Dutch Government. In September, 1998 SMT took over the boatyard by buying the entire assets, since then various contracts have been undertaken and some of the jobs completed and delivered, while others are still under construction. Currently, they are assembling a vessel for Uganda called MV. Buvuma.

The Chief Executive Officers informed the Committee that the company is facing heavy tariff imposed on them. One vessel operator is charged with 29 different charges such as business license, insurance of the vessel, insurance of the port, annual levy, city council license, basin fee, harbour improvement fee, servicing levy, levy for TASAC, Usafi fee, shipping agency fee, health fee, worker's compensation fee, NSSF to mention but a few which makes operations hard.

4.7 TASAC (Tanzania shipping Agencies corporation)

The Committee also interacted with the officers from Tanzania Shipping Agencies corporation (TASAC) and was informed that the agency was established under Tanzania Shipping Agencies Act cap 415 to regulate the Maritime transport industry. Its roles are

maritime administration, regulation of maritime sector, facilitating shipping business and carrying out shipping agency business.

In relation to regulation of maritime administration, marine environment, safety and security as provided under section six of the Act, the functions are as follows:

- Administer the Merchant Shipping act;
- Exercise port state control of all foreign ships and flag state control of ship registered in mainland Tanzania;
- Regulate and approve marine services safety equipment and marine services providers (clearing and forwarding);
- Regulate ferries (seaworthiness);
- Coordinate maritime search and rescue operations;
- Regulate and coordinate the protection and preservation of marine environment;
- Disseminate information and create awareness on matters related to marine environment, safety and security.

4.8 Field visit to the EAC Research Vessel (RV) Jumuiya

The Committee was informed that Research Vessel (RV) Jumuiya is a property of EAC - LVBC and is currently docked at Mwanza South Port, United Republic of Tanzania. RV Jumuiya was constructed in the United Kingdom in 1990 and began her maiden voyage in Lake Nyasa in Malawi for Lake wide surveys and other research activities. The vessel was successfully transferred from Chilumba Port in Lake Nyasa to Mwanza Port and donated to EAC Secretariat by the Department for International Development of the UK (DFID) on 29th May 2006.

RV Jumuiya, among other activities, has been used by LVBC in carrying out research under various projects and conducting bathymetric (hydrographic) surveys for the ports of Mwanza, Port Bell and Kisumu.

For over 10 years, the vessel has been currently out of service awaiting repairs and revalidation of relevant shipping certificates. Thus, the objectives under which the vessel was acquired has never been realized and LVBC continues to incur the expenses of payments of the salaries of the Captain and the Engineer who are stationed at the Vessel which remain non-functional

The LVBC Secretariat informed the Committee that they had invited potential bidders (firms) and submitted their proposals to undertake the specified repairs and dry-docking of RV Jumuiya to pass the seaworthy inspection and be licensed to operate again. From the submitted proposals, LVBC developed a plan to dry-dock and repair RV Jumuiya in

three phases with approximated total cost of USD 100,000. LVBC has budgeted for this assignment in its annual budgets but it has not been successful.

4.9 Field visit to the South Port Mwanza

The Committee noted that the South Port is specialized to serve cargo ships, under the Marine Service Company Limited that is owned by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. The company provides services for passengers on Lake Tanganyika, Lake Nyasa and Victoria. The Company has designed and is building a vessel called MV. Mwanza "Hapa Kazi tu" and it is fully funded by the government. The ferry will be the largest on the Lake Victoria with 92.6 metre long, 17 metres wide and 20 metres high. It is being built by contractors from Gasentec company from South Korea and when completed it is expected to carry a capacity of 1200 passengers, 20 cars and 400 tons of cargo. It has 2 engines, sail for 8- 9 hours unstop and manned by 32 people.

The project commenced in 2019 however due to COVID 19 and the heavy prolonged rains, there was a delay of 10 months. The ferry is expected to be completed at the end of the year 2022 or early 2023. it will be then tested and inspected by the Tanzania Shipping Agency (TASAC) before starting its services. The vessel will operate between Mwanza, Bukoba, Port Bell, Jinja in Uganda and Kisumu in Kenya

Committee Observations

- ***The Committee observed that there was need for a better coordination and mitigation of levies with regards to the Songoro Marine Transport Limited.***
- ***The Committee observed that RV Jumuiya is still in good condition taking into consideration the year it was built (1990). A typical life expectancy of a research vessel like RV Jumuiya is more than 70 years. The Inflatable Boat attached to RV Jumuiya too appears to be in a good condition.***
- ***The Committee observed that TASAC as a regulatory body was facing challenges such as limited man-power, lack of patrol boats and limited budget which hampers effectiveness of its operations.***

Committee Recommendations

- ***The Committee recommends that LVBC management mobilizes funds to repair and returns RV Jumuiya into service at the earliest time possible; take initiative for the Lake to be re surveyed; and continue efforts to improve the safety and navigation of the Lake.***

- ***The Committee recommends to the Assembly to urge Council of Ministers to approve the budget of servicing RV. Jumuiya so that its in position to perform its duty of research to improve on the navigation on the Lake***

5.0 KEY FINDINGS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

In the Republic of Uganda, the group interacted with the key stakeholders and visited different sites as follows;

Stakeholders

- Representatives from the Ministry in charge of EAC Affairs;
- Representatives from the Ministry of Water and Environment;
- Representatives from the Ministry of Works and Transport;
- Representatives from the Department of Immigration;
- Representatives from the Local Government Agencies;
- Officers from the Security Agencies;
- Representatives from the Non- Governmental Organizations;
- Representatives from Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC);
- Representatives from Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO);
- Representatives from Maritime Authority

Sites

- Field visit to the construction site for the fuel storage and transport in Bukasa – Entebbe

The following interventions are being undertaken by the Government of Uganda to address the Maritime Safety challenges and Interventions

5.1 National and regional Search and Rescue program

In order to address the problem of search and rescue exercise, the Government of Uganda earmarked USD 14 million in F/Y 2020/21 to establish search and rescue Centers along the Lake Victoria basin. The project implementation is ongoing. The operational framework consisting of the national steering Committee headed by the Permanent Secretaries of the Ministry of works, Defense and Internal Affairs was launched to oversee its implementation. Furthermore, a technical Committee consisting of membership of different government agencies was constituted. This Committee oversees and provides

guidance on the search and rescue intervention programs. It also coordinates search and rescue responses with the neighbouring Partners States.

The rescue centers were launched at Kawuku, Entebbe, Masese, Kiyindi landing sites and Buvuma island. In order to facilitate the full operationalization on the Centre, one (1) ambulance was purchased and put on standby to assist in case of emergencies, nine (9) rescue boats, and one (1) firefighting boat were also procured. Designs for construction of 9 (nine) weather buoys were approved and are due for delivery on 30th August, 2022 and assembling and commissioning planned for December, 2022.

In addition, the Government is working closely with Lake Victoria Basin Commission to initiate and implement the Multinational Lake Victoria Maritime Communication and Transport Project (MLVMCT) that is funded by African Development Bank (AfDB) for the benefit of Lake Victoria Basin Member States in the areas of trade, marine communication, transport, search and rescue, aids to navigation, among other things. Using this funding, the project established search and rescue coordination center at Entebbe – Uganda where nine other centers in different locations on inland water bodies have also been established.

5.2 Inadequate Marine training and certification

The Government launched a project to undertake trainings for the seafarers. The overall outcome of the project is to have well capacitated crew in the maritime sector who can handle the new infrastructure and equipment the government has invested in the sector.

Interventions to conduct trainings for the crew and captains have been undertaken through funding by the Central Corridor Transit Transport Facilitation Agency (CCTTFA) for the crew of MV. Kaawa. This is because of the fact that training the seafarers is a very expensive venture hence a need for regional coordinated approach. In addition, the government has set up a maritime training Institute at Namasagali –Kamuli District and this Centre is being coordinated by the Busitema University.

5.3 Search and Rescue policy

The Ministry of Works and Defense finalized the process of drafting and approving a National Search and Rescue Policy which is now in use. The policy has resulted into the establishment of a national entity to provide search and rescue services on a 24-hour basis to ensure that assistance is rendered to persons in distress

The Civil Aviation Authority, police and UPDF is in charge of search and rescue and they conduct and coordinate training in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery to

ensure that volunteers, local authorities and other government emergency personnel have the necessary skills to respond effectively in the event of an emergency or disaster.

5.4 National maritime law

In addition to the existing regional Lake Victoria transport Act 2007, the Ministry enacted the Inland water transport Act that covers all inland waterbodies. The law was assented to in August, 2020. Regulations to support enforcement of the Act were drafted and finalized by the Ministry and are now in use.

5.5 Maritime safety equipment

In a bid to enhance Maritime safety, the Ministry of Works and Transport has been undertaking measures aimed at promoting safety and security on the Lake. The Ministry carries out regular distribution of life saving jackets.

5.6 Public safety awareness campaigns

Public safety awareness campaigns are regularly conducted using the print and electronic media targeting traditional boat operators and users. Regular inspection of boats and vessels are regularly carried out to assess their seaworthiness. Furthermore, Aids to navigation to all navigation routes are provided to ensure safety at sea.

5.7 Registration of Boats

The exercise of registering boats across the country for better mobilization, enforcement of standards, monitoring and evaluation of interventions is regularly undertaken. The drafting of regulations to support the registration and licensing of vessels is underway. Although, the Ministry is still using the manual system to facilitate registration, a concept paper has been developed for cabinet approval to introduce a software for automatic registration and licensing.

5.8 International Maritime Organization (IMO) Membership

Uganda became a member of the International Maritime Organization and has also acceded to Maritime Conventions in areas of safety of navigation, vessels and people at the sea namely: International Convention for the prevention of pollution for ships, Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW), Search and Rescue (SAR), Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing collisions at Sea(COLREG),Load Lines (LL) and has been actively participating in all their meetings. Domestication of the provisions of conventions is covered under the Inland Water transport Act and regulations of the Act which are being drafted.

5.9 Old Navigation Charts

Navigation charts are very important tools for the safe passage of boats and ships on waterways. They provide water depths, locations of dangers to navigation, locations and characteristics of aids to navigation and other features.

The Government of Uganda has undertaken a project in partnerships with regional efforts aimed at developing new charts in view of the current ecological changes the lake is currently facing.

5.10 Threat of oil spill

The Ministry of works and transport has teamed up with departments of public works of the governments of the Kenya and United Republic of Tanzania to develop a regional oil spill contingency plan. This is because its absence poses a huge concern to the safety of Lake Victoria.

5.11 Marine Accidents

In order to address the rampant marine accidents, the Ministry of Works and Transport enacted the Inland Water Transport Act which provided for procedures of accident reporting, investigation and mitigation. Subsequent regulations were developed to guide on the management of marine accidents.

5.12 Ship Wreckage

The Committee was informed that wrecks continue to pose a threat to the safety on the lake. Their continued stay in the lake cause obstructions to navigation and create mobility challenges. They are also a source of pollution since some of them sank when they had fuel on board.

The Ministry of works and transport through its agencies has put in place plans to remove sunken vessels along navigation routes and within Ports. However, there is urgent need for regional efforts to manage wrecks for the safety of navigation and pollution prevention. Some of the wrecks that occurred at different shores of Lake Victoria include:

- i. MV Barbus sank in 2004
- ii. MV Kabalega sank in 2005

5. 13 Marine Communication

This is a very important component of Marine safety. The Ministry of Works and Transport through the Uganda Communication Commission and in partnership with Communication companies such as Airtel and MTN installed a toll-free line for use by the vessels in case the vessels are under distress or emergencies. Under the same framework, a coordination Centre was launched at Entebbe to deal with the emergencies.

The Multinational Lake Victoria Maritime Communication and Transport Project (MLVMCT) established a Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) at Entebbe and code number 110 has been assigned as maritime rescue call for maritime operators. The code is already operational.

5.14 Siltation and shallow Ports

Due to human activities and other natural forces on the lake, there has been gradual but steady accumulation of silt within port basins.

The Committee was informed that dredging has not been carried out on ports due to lack of equipment and funding. However, the proposal is underway to remodel the ports where modern amenities such as reception centers, waste management facilities will be put in place. It was observed that most of these ports were constructed during the colonial era.

5.15 Security

In a bid to address the security challenges, the Ministry of Works and Transport signed MOUs with Uganda Peoples Defence Force (UPDF) and Uganda Police on security matters concerning water transport. The police and army have established a detach at Entebbe where regular surveillance and operations are conducted.

Although piracy accidents are few and rare there is need to come up with full marine regulations. It should also be noted that the lake is transboundary and thus bringing on board various users. In this aspect, incidents of collision, theft and disagreements might arise.

5. 16 Meteorology

The committee was informed that a draft MOU between the Ministry of Works and Transport and the National Meteorological Authority to coordinate aeronautical and maritime meteorological SAR services is in place. In this MOU, daily weather alerts are provided to the vessels to ensure their safety on the lake.

5. 17 Reception facilities

The Ministry of Works and Transport has budgeted to install reception facilities in ports to facilitate structured waste disposal system in order to mitigate pollution of the lake from human waste, used oils, garbage and other forms of waste from ships.

5. 18 Infrastructural interventions

The following Interventions that have been taken include:

- Rehabilitation of the wagon ferry MV. Pemba has been completed and the vessel is now operational.
- The civil works for planned construction of the new Bukasa Port are expected to commence in 2022.
- A private oil jetty has been constructed at Kawuku, Entebbe by Mahathi group to facilitate transportation and handling of fuel products from the Kisumu oil pipeline. The facility has storage capacity of 70 million liters and will use barges now under construction to transport fuel across the lake.

5. 19 Field visit to the construction site for the fuel storage and transport in Bukaasa – Entebbe

The sub- committee undertook a field visit to a construction project for the fuel storage and transportation facility. The construction of the new, magnificent multi billion fuel storage and transport system in Bukasa village off Entebbe Road. It is expected to be operational in 2023.

The project is being executed by Mahathi Infau Uganda Limited which is an engineering, procurement and Construction projects primarily in oil and gas sector. The project involves construction of 14 fuel tanks, a couple of 220-meter long jetties and ships.

Once completed and fully functional the project will have capacity to store up to 70 million liters of fuel making the project one of the largest fuel terminals in East and central Africa. On the other hand with a speed of up to 10 nautical miles, the jetties are estimated to be delivering fuel within 16 hours while one ship will be able to carry about 200 trailers of fuel

The project is anticipated to ease transportation of fuel from Kisumu to Kampala via Lake Victoria. At the present most fuel products such as diesel, gasoline, Jet A1 are transported by road making them susceptible to contamination, numerous road accidents which have claimed hundreds of East Africans and uncertain suppliers. The voluminous tanks are expected to address the challenges of fuel shortages in Uganda and the neighboring

countries The project will offer both direct and indirect employment to Ugandan s and other east African citizens

Committee Observations

- ***The Committee observed that the current navigation charts are old and not updated, therefore requiring fresh re-mapping and survey of both the navigation routes and charts;***
- ***The Committee observed that there is no proper coordination in dredging the wrecks of accidents from the Lake hence causing danger to the Lake users.***

Committee recommendations

- ***The Committee recommends to the Assembly to appeal to Partner States to undertake regional efforts for harmonized port developments;***
- ***The Committee recommends to the Assembly to urge the Council to appeal to the Republic of Uganda to direct marine police to strengthen coordination in ensuring that adequate security is provided on the lake;***
- ***Developing a contingency plan for oil spill should be fast-tracked since they are anchored with LVBC Act. Furthermore, an oil spill contingency fund should be set up to cater for the oil spill emergencies;***
- ***Oils spill equipment should be made available and installed at strategic points within the shores of Lake Victoria in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania to avert any accidents that might arise as a result of the oil spills.***

6.0 KEY FINDINGS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI

In the Republic of Burundi, the Sub- Committee interacted with the following stakeholders and visited different sites as follow:

Stakeholders

- Representatives from the Ministry of East African Community Affairs;
- Representatives from the Ministry of Water, Energy and Mines;
- Representatives from the Ministry of Commerce, Transport, Industries and Tourism;
- Representatives from Lake Tanganyika Authority

- Representatives from Maritime Ports and Railways Authority;
- The commander Marine-National Police Burundi;
- The Commander Marine Force-Burundi National Defence Force (FDNB);
- Shippers Agents – ASALAT (Association des Amateurs du Lac) and ABADR (Association Burundaise des Agences en Douane et Transitaires)
- Fishermen Representatives from Rumonge;

Site

- Field visit to Burundi Port and the construction site of the Ports expansion

The Committee was informed by stakeholders that Lake Tanganyika has been beneficial to them but with a number of challenges while navigating the waters of the Lake. The government of Burundi has however put in place mitigation measures for lasting solution like the construction of the docking area and a slipway.

6.1 Assessment of Security and Safety in regard to free movement of goods

Whereas safety of transport across Lake Tanganyika is important, safety of the lake itself is paramount. It is therefore worth mentioning that the Lake itself is threatened and needs an aggressive approach to protect it. The following are the threats to the existence of the Lake.

- Excessive pollution.** In Bujumbura alone there are many industries that are around the shores of Lake Tanganyika such as soap factories, breweries, to mention but a few. Waste from these factories always finds its way to the lake. In addition to industrial waste, there is also a problem of domestic waste, oil spillage from boats, pesticides and fertilizers, plastic bottles and heaps of garbage around the lake shores.
- Rapid population growth.** It is estimated that ten million people live around Lake Tanganyika. This has resulted into over exploitation of biological resources of the lake. A study done between 1995-2011 showed fish stock had decreased by 25% whereas the fishermen had increased fourfold. Harvest per fisherman decreased by 81%.
- Increased human activity on the lake.** This causes soil erosion that in turn results into sedimentation. A study conducted on the port of Kalemie in DRC reveals that the Port has over 195,840 tonnes of sand that need to be dredged for enhanced functioning of the port.

6.2 Security and safety on Lake Tanganyika.

The committee was informed that different actors on the lake faced the following challenges;

Fishermen

They noted a number of challenges met while carrying out their trade on the lake.

- a) Robbery on the waters of Lake Tanganyika which often results in loss of their fishing equipment which are expensive to buy.
- b) They complained about raids from DRC soldiers who often confiscated their oil/fuel.
- c) Fishermen were prone to accidents on the lake that are mainly attributed to use of old, sub-standard and often overloaded boats.
- d) Fishermen noted that the big shipping lines disregarded their trade and quite often when fishing at night, the ships knocked them causing sometimes fatal accidents and destruction/drowning of their boats.
- e) However, there were concerns about fishermen for engaging in illegal fishing methods like, fishing of small, immature fish, using under-size nets and fishing in shallow waters that are breeding areas for fish.

6.3 Shipping Companies

The Committee was addressed by Association des Amateurs du Lac (ASALAC) a representative body of the shipping companies in Burundi.

- a) The shippers informed the Committee that navigation on Lake Tanganyika relies on an old map or navigation charts. The map does not address the modern challenges and features on the Lake.
- b) They noted that whereas there are clear shipping routes, fishing areas were not marked. They requested that fishing areas should be marked to avoid accidents where shipping lines run over fishermen.
- c) There is lack of security control stations to control navigation.
- d) There are few rescue boats on the lake which leaves some emergencies unattended to.
- e) Poor maintenance of rivers that flow into Lake Tanganyika often causes silting that eventually leads to grounding of units
- f) There is lack of radio communication on the lake which has made response to emergencies slow.
- g) Communication gap between the local authorities and the ship owners which hampers harmonious working relations.
- h) There is no sufficient lighting at night in the different ports on Lake Tanganyika.
- i) The shippers complained that their staff were forced to pay for Covid19 tests in dollars.

- j) The shippers were concerned that they were prohibited from docking at night. This results in long queues and delay to offload cargo.
- k) Lack of a slipway at the port. This meant that Burundi registered ships had to be taken to Kigoma or Kalemie for repair.
- l) Shippers noted that Burundi had stopped training new maritime staff. This meant that the officers in service were getting old and Burundi was now prey to foreign qualified staff. Burundi currently relies on Congolese teachers because Burundi lacked qualified teachers.

6.4 Mechanisms employed to curb security challenges

Despite the challenges, the Marine Units of the National Police and Army, the Port authorities and government at large, has instituted measures to curb insecurity and possible hazards to people and vessels plying Lake Tanganyika.

- a) To curb insecurity and robberies occasioned to fishermen, the police register all boats. All boats are named and required to carry flags. The intention is to identify all boats, their operators and get rid of unknown and possibly wrong elements.
- b) All fishermen are given badges and registered before going on to the lake for business. Time of sail off is recorded and time when they are expected back. This has helped raise alarm and kickstart rescue operations if crew never returns or returns late than expected time.
- c) Defence always makes patrols on the waters of Lake Tanganyika under Burundi's jurisdiction, both during the day and at night. They have often rescued marooned fishermen when ever they show alarm lights.
- d) Police always makes appeal to fishermen to avoid trespassing into the DRC waters. The Marine units of Burundi have no jurisdiction there and cannot follow to rescue them in case of trouble.
- e) Security in Burundi has mapped operations for all the 18 beaches on the Lake Tanganyika shore line from Kajaga – Rumonge. It is along such obscure beaches that unmarked boats suspected to belong to wrong elements have been traced.
- f) There has been enhanced collaboration between the Ports Authorities and Security forces. The shared information has helped in better handling of Ports clients.

6.5 Assessment existence of joint surveillance

The committee was informed that so far there is no mechanism in place of a joint surveillance operation on the Lake. But they highlighted a need for cooperation especially between Burundi and Democratic Republic of Congo's marine units.

6.6 Harmonization of Policies, Laws and Regulations governing utilization of the Lake

The most elaborate way in the attempt towards harmonization of laws, policies and regulation is the establishment of the Lake Tanganyika Authority. Its role is to oversee the implementation of programs and project activities in accordance with the provisions of the convention and perform other activities as determined by the management committee and the conference of ministers.

The convention establishing the Lake Tanganyika Authority as the implementing body unites countries in realizing that Lake Tanganyika is a shared heritage with unique biological diversity. It establishes legal and institutional frameworks for cooperation and management.

6.7 Mechanisms in place to control illegal fishing, pollution and environmental degradation

To fight illegal fishing and pollution, the government has employed a number of avenues.

- a) The Police has been carrying out sensitization activities among the fishing communities about illegal fishing methods that threaten the eco-system, and put food security and regional stability at risk.
- b) In addition to the above, police often carries out operations to impound illegal fish nets, ban them and arrest the perpetrators.
- c) The Government employs the use of fishing holidays. This is a system where fishing is done for a particular period after which fishermen are supposed to be off the lake to allow small fish to mature before resumption of fishing activities.
- d) To control pollution, construction of a wide trench that gathers all the water that flows into Lake Tanganyika is in advanced stages. The channel has a number of gates that sieve waste, such as plastic bottles and bags that would otherwise flow into the lake.
- e) Dumping garbage around the shores of the lake is prohibited. Previously this was rampant and contributed largely to eutrophication of the Lake Tanganyika.

6.8 Field visit to Bujumbura Port

The Committee visited Bujumbura Port on Lake Tanganyika which is a potential hub for the economy of Burundi and part of Eastern DRC. It is a Five feet deep port but eight if dredged to accommodate bigger shipping lines. The port has a general cargo berth, a wharf for the ships that operate at the port and warehouses for storage.

The Committee was informed that ships that operate at the port mainly ply from Kigoma port in Tanzania, Zambia and Kalemie in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The most common goods at the port are Cement, Maize and other assorted goods.

The Committee also toured construction sites at the Port. Most of the projects are in advanced stages and this will sort out some of the challenges that the shipping companies complained about, as constraints to their business. Among the projects under construction are:

- a) Construction of the Slipway. This will help in launching ships and boats onto the lake after building or landing for repair.
- b) Construction of canals along the port to avoid flooding. Rising water levels have been a threat to the port and communities that live on the shores of the lake. After completion of these canals, it is envisaged that the water that wonders away whenever it rains or when the water table rises, shall reduce significantly.
- c) Construction of a new container depot and a marshaling area. The old facility was constructed in the colonial times and largely has warehouses for storage. A modern container terminal and a marshaling facility are in advanced stages to handle containerized cargo.
- d) Construction of a new berth. This is intended to accommodate bigger ships and increase the handling capacity of the port.
- e) Construction of sieving channels to the lake to avoid pollution.

Committee Observations

- ***The committee observed that pollution and sedimentation need to be reduced, local population has to be made aware of the causes of problems they are facing every day and alternative sources of livelihood need to be developed for local population.***
- ***The committee observed that so far there is no mechanism in place of a joint surveillance operation on the Lake. But they highlighted a need for cooperation especially between Burundi and Democratic Republic of Congo's marine units.***

Committee Recommendation

- ***There is need for rehabilitation of the existing sewerage treatment stations to avoid raw proliferation into the lake***

7.0 GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Observations

- The Committee observed existing gaps such as absence of updated navigation charts, rescue services on 24-hour basis and a comprehensive maritime security strategy that needs to be addressed to enhance effective communication and minimize accidents on Lakes Victoria and Tanganyika.
- It was further noted that EAC Partner states lack harmonized regional policy that would facilitate and coordinate inland water search and rescue missions as and when necessary.

Recommendations

The Committee recommends to the Assembly to urge the Council to:

- a) Develop a harmonized policy at a regional level so as to have a unified approach that is responsible for facilitating and coordinating inland water search and rescue missions as and when necessary.
- b) Update navigation charts and establish rescue services on 24-hour basis to minimize accidents on Lake Victoria and Lake Tanganyika.
- c) Develop a comprehensive maritime security strategy to enhance effective communication.
- d) Urgently scale up regional efforts to manage wrecks for the safety of navigation and pollution.
- e) Establish monitoring networks across the countries that share Lake Tanganyika. This can be achieved through the Lake Tanganyika Authority.
- f) Determination of boundaries or buffer zones around the lake. This will act as a catchment area for waste, soil/sand that would otherwise wash away to the lake.
- g) Rehabilitation of the existing sewerage treatment stations to avoid raw proliferation into the lake.
- h) Sustainable land management by communities that border the lake. Fight deforestation to possible levels.

8.0 CONCLUSION

The Committee on Regional Affairs and Conflict Resolution wishes to thank the Rt Hon. Speaker and the office of the Clerk for facilitating it to carry out its oversight function. The Committee further appreciates the stakeholders for the information given to the Committee. The Committee hopes that the findings and recommendations contained in this report will greatly improve on the safety and security of movement of people and

goods on Lake Victoria and Tanganyika. The Committee recommends to the Assembly to adopt the report.

Construction of the docking and slip way on Lake Tanganyika



Construction site for the Fuel storage and transport in Bukaasa - Entebbe



MV Buvuma , being assembling for Uganda by Songoro Marine Transport Ltd



Construction of a ferry at South Port Mwanza

