



## EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

### Press Release

#### **EALA Speaker Addresses the 151<sup>st</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland**

**Geneva, Switzerland – 20 October 2025:** The 151st Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly opened this week in Geneva, Switzerland, bringing together over 1,000 Members of Parliaments and parliamentary staff across the globe to deliberate under the theme: “*Upholding Humanitarian Norms and Supporting Humanitarian Action in Times of Crisis*”.

In a compelling address, this evening, the Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), **Rt Hon. Joseph Ntakirutimana**, called for renewed global commitment to humanitarian access and civilian protection, particularly amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. He stressed the urgent need to translate International Humanitarian Law into robust domestic legislation, enforce accountability, and ensure safe, transparent delivery of aid—especially to women and children.

The Speaker urged parliaments worldwide to strengthen humanitarian efforts by prioritizing health, food security, education, water, sanitation, and climate resilience, even under fiscal and security pressures. He emphasized safeguarding aid routes, protecting humanitarian workers, and preventing disruptions to relief operations.

Highlighting the importance of inclusive collaboration, he called on parliaments to engage civil society, faith groups, businesses, academics, and youth in coordinated responses. He proposed the establishment of a Humanitarian Forum to guide planning, protection, and funding, with youth and women-led initiatives ensuring equitable aid delivery.

The Speaker also called for urgent action to protect vulnerable groups—including women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, religious minorities, and political opponents—underscoring that humanitarian aid must remain free from political influence

and focused solely on relief. He advocated for national and regional laws that prioritize these communities and prevent misuse of aid.

To strengthen parliamentary leadership, the Speaker emphasized the need for training in humanitarian law, diplomacy, and crisis response. He encouraged regional cooperation and engagement with global partners, alongside the integration of gender-sensitive approaches in all humanitarian policies.

Concluding his address, the Speaker reaffirmed EALA's commitment to International Humanitarian Law and principled action. He pledged EALA's leadership in a regional, inclusive, and gender-sensitive response to crises, ensuring aid reaches the most vulnerable. He called on legislators to turn humanitarian commitments into clear, accountable actions and guide governments toward compassion, protection, and a resilient future for all.

The Speaker was accompanied to Geneva by **Hon. Dr. Makame Hasnuu Abdulla**, The Chair of the General Purposes committee in the East African Legislative Assembly.

The IPU is currently chaired by the Speaker of the National Assembly of Tanzania, Rt. Hon. Dr. Tulia Ackson, who has served as President of the IPU since October 2023 and will hold the position for a three-year term.

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### ***About IPU***

*IPU most commonly refers to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, an international organization of national parliaments established in 1889 to promote peace, democracy, and cooperation among peoples. It serves as a focal point for parliamentary dialogue, works to strengthen representative institutions, and facilitates the exchange of experience among parliamentarians. The IPU's work also includes fostering human rights and addressing global issues like climate change, peace, security, and sustainable development.*

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