

**EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY**

**EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**Welcoming remarks by RT. Hon. JOSEPH nTAKIRUTIMANA, Speaker of EALA at the address of H.E. HON EVARISTE NDASHIMIYE, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI and chairman of the EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY HEADS OF STATE SUMMIT MARCH 28TH 2019, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, BURUNDI**

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**Your Excellency**, I am pleased to welcome you to the 3rd Meeting of the 1st Session of the 5th Assembly, which commenced yesterday, here in this beautiful City of Bujumbura. On the outset, I take the singular opportunity on behalf of the Members of EALA and on my own behalf to bring very warm greetings from the people of East Africa.

We, the 5th Assembly, are extremely grateful for being accorded this opportunity to meet here in Bujumbura and to interact with our sisters and brothers from this part of East Africa. We sincerely thank you for promptly responding to our invitation and your acceptance to address us.

**Your Excellency,** permit me to quickly bring to your attention the business that is lined up for debate by this Assembly during this meeting. The Assembly looks forward to debate and pass the EAC Supplementary Appropriation Bill, 2023; the EAC Standardisation, Accreditation and Conformity Assessment Bill, 2023; and various Committee reports.

**Your Excellency,** since its inauguration in December 2022, the 5th Assembly has embarked on its mandate with renewed spirit.

The Assembly is, however, grappling with issues that require the amendment of the EAC Treaty. The 21st Summit of the EAC Heads of State adopted Kiswahili and French as official languages of the Community. It is also imperative that all efforts are made to ensure that the use of these two languages becomes a reality.

**Your Excellency**, I want to acknowledge, through your leadership, the strong leading role being played by the Republic of Burundi in supporting peace missions on the continent, particularly in Somalia, Central African Republic and now DRC. I salute you, as the Chairperson of the EAC Summit, for you efforts in supporting the AU- mandated Nairobi peace process in restoring peace in DRC. Your efforts have, indeed, been proved to be a good test of ability to respond to violence in the region. Through you, the Assembly would like to see the EAC Heads of State continue to seek a permanent solution to the conflict in DRC.

**Your Excellency,** in this exciting time of integration, we remain committed to maintaining, if not improving, the speed at which integration has been taking place. We want to thank you as our Chair of the Summit for the speed at which you are steering the implementation of the Customs Union, Common Market as we look forward to the conclusion of the Monetary Union and the Political Federation.

**Your Excellency,** I wish on behalf of the Assembly to extend our appreciation to you and your government for continuing to steer the Republic of Burundi to greater heights. Burundi is now a peaceful country. May I also congratulate the Republic of Burundi for sending to EALA a team of dedicated and committed Members.

**Pause to recognize invited guests, before conclusion and inviting the HE to address the gathering.**

**Invited guests to be confirmed……..**

Without taking up more time, it is now my great pleasure and honour to welcome Your Excellency to address this august Assembly, today, Tuesday 28th March, 2023.

I thank you for your kind attention!