



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY
EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**WELCOMING REMARKS BY HON. ABDIRAHIN H. ABDI, SPEAKER OF
EALA AT THE ADDRESS TO EALA BY H.E. MWAI KIBAKI, PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA, TUESDAY 25 JANUARY, 2011**

Your Excellency Mwai Kibaki, President of the Republic of Kenya;
Rt. Hon. Kenneth Marende, Speaker of the Kenya National Assembly;
Chairperson, EAC Council of Ministers;
Hon. Ministers;
The Secretary General of the EAC;
Hon. Members of Parliament and EALA;
Your Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the EALA and on my own behalf, I wish to most warmly welcome
Your Excellency to today's Sitting of the Assembly.

We are so grateful and indeed feel honoured because every time the Assembly is
in Session in Nairobi, you have always gladly accepted our invitation to address
us. To us, this is a clear signal about the importance you and your Government

attach to this August House and indeed to the EAC integration efforts. Thank you very much Your Excellency.

May I first of all take this opportunity to congratulate Your Excellency, the Government and the people of Kenya for the recent holding of a peaceful and successful referendum on the new Constitution for Kenya. This landmark achievement has been hailed far and beyond and it is only natural that we too add our voice in heralding this great achievement.

May I further take this opportunity on behalf of the East African Legislative Assembly to extend through Your Excellency, our appreciation to the Summit of EAC Heads of State for the recent special Summit meeting on Food Security and Climate Change. This historic meeting was not only timely but we also believe it laid a clear path on how EAC should address the above two issues. We call upon the Partner States to waste no time in ensuring that the milestones set at this Summit are embarked on without further delay.

On our part, we are proud of the tremendous progress the Community is making in the integration efforts. With constant and foresighted guidance from the Summit, the Community is on course in attaining the four main pillars of integration it set out to achieve. The Customs Union is in place; the Common Market became operational on 1st July 2010; preparations for negotiations for the Monetary Union are already in advanced stages; and already significant studies on the Political Federation have been undertaken on the orders of the Summit. Indeed the 12th Ordinary Meeting of the Summit held in early December, 2010 went further to make more bold steps towards the achievement of the Monetary Union and the Political Federation. We as the legislative arm of the Community,

pledge our commitment to fulfill our role in the Community and assure Your Excellency that we are ready to go an extra mile should we be called upon.

Your Excellency, in the past seven months since we were last here, the Assembly has managed to enact six pieces of legislation. Four other Bills are on the floor of the House and will form the bulk of our work in the next two weeks here in Nairobi. We were also able to play our oversight role by not only demanding progress reports on the various programmes and projects of the Community, but also carried out on-spot/on-site visits to these projects to validate the information provided in the progress reports. We also continued to offer budgetary oversight by ensuring that the resources provided to the Community were allocated within the priorities of the Community.

In our representative role, not only have we been able to establish formal working and reporting mechanisms with the National Assemblies, but we have constantly consulted the people of East Africa on all the proposed legislations and a number of Protocols for the Community. We believe that constant dialogue with citizens of the region is of utmost importance to ensure that we all move together from one stage of integration to the other so that ultimately, we own and share our achievements collectively.

Your Excellency, the next two weeks shall see EALA deliberate on crucial legislative business. We expect to debate the following business among others:-

- a. The EAC Elections Bill;
- b. The EAC Service Commission Bill;
- c. The Lake Victoria Basin Commission Bill;
- d. Hold Committee Meetings; and
- e. The consideration of various Committee Reports.

Your Excellency, I also wish to bring to your attention the fact that this year, EALA shall be marking its 10th Anniversary. The commemoration which shall be observed in all the EAC Partner States will climax with a wide range of activities envisaged to be observed in Arusha, Tanzania on November 29, 2011.

EALA shall thus use the observance of its 10th Anniversary to reflect on the various achievements (and challenges) realized over the past ten years and appraise its own effectiveness as a Regional Assembly as it sets the mood for the next decade.

With those few remarks, it is now my humble duty to welcome Your Excellency to address this August House.