



## **EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY**

### **EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**WELCOMING SPEECH BY RT. HON. DANIEL F. KIDEGA, SPEAKER OF EALA AT THE ADDRESS OF H.E. DR ALI MOHAMMED SHEIN, PRESIDENT OF ZANZIBAR AND CHAIRMAN OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> MEETING OF THE 5<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> ASSEMBLY AT THE ZANZIBAR HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, ZANZIBAR, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA ON OCTOBER 11<sup>TH</sup> 2016**

Your Excellency Dr. Ali Mohammed Shein, President of Zanzibar and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council;

H.E Amb. Seif Ali Iddi, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of Zanzibar

Rt. Hon. Zubeir Ali Maulid, Speaker of the Zanzibar House of Representatives;

His Lordship Justice Omar Othman Makungu, the Chief Justice

The Chairperson and Council of EAC Ministers;

Hon. Ministers of Zanzibar;

Hon. Members of EALA and House of Representatives, Zanzibar;

The Secretary General of the EAC;

Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners;

Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen:

**Your Excellency**, permit me to warmly welcome you to address EALA at the commencement of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the 5<sup>th</sup> Session of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly.

I thank you for responding to our invitation and note this is your first official engagement with the Assembly since your re-election as the President of Zanzibar. I therefore congratulate you following your successful re-election last year, which affirms the great faith that Zanzibaris have in your leadership. I wish you well, and assure you of my support and that of the Assembly as you lead Zanzibar/ United Republic of Tanzania and the EAC, to greater heights.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly is similarly holding its sessions here in Zanzibar for the first time, as part of its principle of rotation. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Assembly held its 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the First Session in the House of Representatives in Zanzibar in December, 2007 then at the old Chambers. We are therefore, extremely grateful, to be accorded another opportunity to meet here in the Isles and this time in this magnificent Chambers in Chukwani.

**Your Excellency**, with about 8 months left to end of our tenure of duty, EALA continues to work tirelessly. We are particularly keen to make-up for the lost time, incurred for the better part of 2014 owing to a leadership crisis.

The Assembly has since 2015, held a total of 11 Sittings, this one being the 12<sup>th</sup>. In the ensuing period, the Assembly has enacted 14 Bills, passed 14 Resolutions and adopted 19 Reports in addition to dispensing with 5 petitions and posing a number of questions posed to the Council of Ministers.

**Excellency**, the recent adoption by EALA of a key Resolution calling on the Summit of EAC Heads of State to amend the Treaty for the Establishment of the EAC, to include Kiswahili as one of the official languages of the Community is one that duly interests Zanzibar. Once realized, I can contemplate the EAC Kiswahili Commission based here in Zanzibar shall be extremely occupied with a full menu on its plate. As the hub of Kiswahili, Zanzibar is likely to churn out teachers and diverse experts, whose contribution to EAC will no doubt result in deeper integration.

**Excellency**, during this Plenary Session, EALA shall debate on the EAC Counter Trafficking in Persons Bill, 2016, the EAC Polythenes Control Materials Bill, 2016 and the EAC Gender Bill, 2015. EALA will also analyze several oversight reports of its Committees, debate crucial Motions and pass Resolutions.

**Your Excellency**, a study by the African Union, World Bank and the UNECA titled African Regional Index 2016, reveals the EAC to be the fastest growing bloc across various dimensions of Regional integration analyzed.

In this exciting time of integration, we need to maintain the tempo as we implement the Customs Union and the Common Market and concretize the next steps towards the Monetary Union and ultimately, the Political Federation. In so doing, the EAC should address existing bottlenecks such as NTBs, free movement of persons and goods. Absolute Political will is vital. The region must also keep on track with its 10-year Infrastructure Development Strategy, which among other things, lays emphasis on Public-Private Partnership investments in railways, roads, ports and energy.

Matters of Peace and Security remain pivotal towards ensuring progress in the integration process. What comes to mind is the need for restoration of normalcy particularly, in the Republic of Burundi and Republic of South Sudan to enable citizens to carry on with their lives without fear of any more loss of life, injury or destruction of property.

In Burundi, this Assembly has already paid a heavy price with the assassination of one of its own the Late Hon Hafsa Mossi in July this year. May her Soul rest in eternal Peace (pause).

EALA is very keen to see more attention given to the Inter-Burundi Dialogue. It is heart-warming the EAC Heads of State Summit recently consented to availing additional resources to keep the process on-going. In January this year, EALA held a Public hearing on the deteriorating human rights situation in Burundi following a petition by the Pan-African Lawyers Union, debated the matter and approved a key report. I shall at the end of October, 2016 hold comprehensive consultations with the Convener on the Inter-Burundi Dialogue, H.E. Benjamin William Mkapa.

EALA also welcomes to the fold, the Republic of South Sudan and look forward to further stability in the country in line with Article 6 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the EAC. This is the surest way to ensure citizens of the Republic of South Sudan will enjoy benefits from the integration process.

**Your Excellency**, once again, I wish you well as you continue to lead Zanzibar to prosperity. Zanzibar has a free port area and within this regional dispensation, has potential of becoming the unprecedented "Dubai of Africa."

Zanzibar offers an attractive touristic and investment destination given the respective beautiful sites and the designated export producing zones. The possibility of oil discovery on the island of Pemba, will boost the Zanzibari economy. The Pemba channel is also a profitable fishing ground at the Swahili coast. I have noted the recent improvements in the Pemba airport, which is a precursor affording airlines, opportunities to connect that part of the country to the rest of the region and enhance internal and external trade.

The annual Zanzibar International Film Festival, that showcases the best of the Swahili Coast arts scene, including Taarab, remains a major tourism earner and an event I have personally followed with much awe, over the years.

**Excellency**, many East Africans today enjoy Light Crystal Television Devices (flat screens) in their living rooms. However, many may be unaware the first colour television station South of Sahara, was inaugurated right here in Zanzibar, 43 years ago. Television Zanzibar - thus played a major factor in opening up of the region to developmental oriented opportunities. All these positives can further be built on, as we look towards the future.

Before I invite you to address this Assembly, permit me **Excellency** to re-state the term of the Assembly ends mid next year in June. I wish to congratulate the United Republic of Tanzania for sending to EALA, a team of dedicated and committed Members, two of whom (Hon Maryam Ussi & Hon Abdullah Mwinyi) are domiciled here in Zanzibar. While the rest are still legible for re-election to the 4<sup>th</sup> Assembly, you may wish to know **Excellency**, that one of your own sons



of the soil, Hon Abdullah Mwinyi, has successfully completed his tenure of duty. I consider him to be still energetic enough and ready to take on additional responsibilities here in Zanzibar, the United Republic of Tanzania or the region. I am sure there are a number of other gallant sons and daughters here in Zanzibar who are as capable if given a chance in EALA.

**Excellency**, permit me now to briefly introduce to you some of the dignitaries' present;

### **LIST TO BE AVAILED**

Finally, it is with great pleasure and honour that I execute my humble duty to welcome Your Excellency to address this August Assembly, today, Tuesday, the 11<sup>th</sup> day of October 2016. I thank you for your kind attention.