



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**WELCOMING SPEECH BY RT. HON. NGOGA KAROLI MARTIN,
SPEAKER OF EALA AT THE ADDRESS OF H.E. YOWERI KAGUTA
MUSEVENI, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA - JANUARY
23RD , 2018, KAMPALA, UGANDA**

- **Your Excellency, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda,**
- **Rt. Hon. Rebecca A. Kadaga, Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda**
- **Hon. Chairperson and Members of the EAC Council of Ministers,**
- **Speakers' Emeritus, Rt Hon Abdirahin Abdi and Rt Hon Daniel F. Kidega,**
- **Your Lordship Justice Dr Emmanuel Ugirashebuja, President of the East African Court of Justice,**
- **Hon. Members of the East African Legislative Assembly and the Parliament of Uganda,**

- **Members' *Emeritus* of EALA present,**
- **Members of the Diplomatic Corp,**
- **Senior Government officials in attendance,**
- **Representatives of the Private Sector and Civil Society,**
- **Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:**

Your Excellency, it is with profound humility that I warmly welcome you to deliver the State of EAC Address at the 2nd Meeting of the 1st Session of the 4th EALA.

At the outset, I wish you a progressive year full of good health and prosperity as you lead the Republic of Uganda and the EAC to greater heights. I duly express my gratitude to Your Excellency for positively responding to this invitation, recalling that you have previously honoured all nine invitations (this is the tenth) extended to you, since the inaugural one in May 2018. EALA remains truly indebted to Your Excellency and thank you for your endless support.

Your Excellency, we are very pleased to commence our Sittings right here in Kampala following our inauguration in December 2017. The Members of the 4th Assembly seated here before you, collectively intend to deliver to the expectations of their mandate. The Members elected me to lead the Assembly as we steer the integration ship forward. I accepted the responsibility of the Speakership with magnanimity and with a promise to uphold the dignity of the House at all times. I promised to spare no efforts

to provide the desired leadership and enhance teamwork with my colleagues. My colleagues and I totally believe in the resilience of our great region and together, we can and must do more for the sustainable future of our Community.

Your Excellency, the current East African integration endeavours have come a long way. As our integration is deepened and widened in its scope, the issues for which the Assembly is called to address are also becoming complex. We recognize that all pillars of integration shall in the long run unlock great opportunities for our citizens. During our tenure, the Assembly shall collaborate with all stakeholders to solidify integration and give East Africans – the cherished benefits that integration offers.

In line with standard practice of Parliamentary autonomy and in accordance with the directive of the Council of Ministers taken some months ago, the Assembly has done the preparatory work, picking up from where our predecessors ended to operationalize the autonomy of finance and administration of the Assembly. This will improve on the efficiency with which we intend to execute our mandate.

The opportunity to interact with Your Excellency offers time to reflect on general policies that relate to the progress of the Community and the attendant strategic areas requiring attention. Excellency, you delivered the first such address to the Assembly in the year 2008 in Arusha and since then, the State of EAC Address has been institutionalized. The address by our

Heads of State avail us the opportunity to renew our commitments to the integration process and pledge to continue enhancing our specific role as an Assembly. In this regard, we thank you Excellency and all the Members of the Summit for your unrelenting support.

Your Excellency, it is vital for the region to continue to be steadfast in its desire to remain a strong, united, resilient and influential player on the continent and the globe. Today, the region is proud of the achievements of the Customs Union and the Common Market. The Monetary Union is the logical culmination of the integration efforts as it seeks to harmonise the fiscal and monetary policies leading to a single currency. The Protocol once implemented, is also expected to eliminate the attendant costs to currency conversions, reduce transaction costs and minimise inflation in the region. As East Africans, we look forward to the ultimate goal of the Political Federation which your Excellency, continue to champion.

To this effect, we should continue to address challenges in order to secure EAC's future for posterity. Some of the areas include stamping out the NTBs and the need to enhance free movement of goods, labour and services. We need to venture into new areas of integration and consolidate those we have agreed upon. We have to pay special attention to areas that have impact to our young people notably one education area and equal fees. This way, we shall develop a critical mass of East Africans deeply connected and with common vision and destiny. Sixteen years down the road, and with focused

leadership in our respective Partner States, the EAC has capacity to overcome any deviation that may stand in the way of our integration agenda.

For the region to take full charge of our planning, the Summit of EAC Heads of State has given policy direction on the matter of Sustainable Funding Mechanism. We hope this is an area the EAC Council of Ministers will dispense with this year. Empirical evidence has shown, that we have one of the best performing and most resilient regional bloc. Nevertheless, this does not and should not put us under any illusion and complacency. Rather, the successes we have been able to register should challenge us to work harder and faster. The Assembly shall undertake the task to assess further our successes and challenges with a view of working out solutions together with all partners in this process.

During this Sitting, the Assembly shall consider the following Bills:

1. The EAC Monetary Institute Bill, 2017, the EAC Statistics Bureau Bill, 2017 and the EAC Oaths Bill, 2017.

The EAC Monetary Institute Bill, 2017 and the EAC Statistics Bureau Bill, 2017 are envisaged in the roadmap towards realization of the Monetary Union. They are coming two years late according to this roadmap. The Assembly shall consider them with this urgency in mind.

Your Excellency, we salute your leadership under which notable policies have been rolled out and continue to be implemented. We congratulate you for your efforts in fighting poverty through various initiatives including but not limited to “Operation Wealth Creation” and your practical advocacy and inspiration to modern farming. Such initiatives play a critical part in empowering citizens to take advantage of opportunities as Uganda embraces social transformation agenda. We celebrate with you all the achievements **Your Excellency** and further congratulate you following the occasion of the 32nd NRM Day, which will be celebrated this Friday, January 26th, 2018.

Before I invite **Your Excellency** to address this Assembly, may I briefly introduce to you some of the dignitaries’ present;

(LIST TO BE AVAILED)

Finally, Your **Excellency**, 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 23rd day of January 2018.

I thank you for your kind attention.