



## **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 JOHN POMBE MAGUFULI, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA DELIVERED BY THE PRIME MINISTER, RT HON KASSIM MAJALIWA – BANK OF TANZANIA CONFERENCE CENTRE, DAR ES SALAAM, TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2015**

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**Rt Hon Majaliwa, Kassim Majaliwa, Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania;**

**Rt. Hon. Job Yustino Ndugai, Speaker of Parliament of Tanzania;**

**The Chairperson and Council of EAC Ministers;**

**The Secretary General of the EAC;**

**Hon. Members of EALA and Parliament of Tanzania;**

**Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners present;**

**Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen:**

**Rt Hon Prime Minister:** Permit me as I welcome you to address EALA at the commencement of the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the 4<sup>th</sup> Session of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly, to wish you a belated but prosperous and progressive 2016.

I thank H.E. Dr John Pombe Magufuli for delegating to you the task which is also your first official engagement with the Assembly since appointment as the Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania. **Kwa Kweli, Hapa Kazi Tu!**

I congratulate you for your appointment and wish you well in your endeavor to lead United Republic of Tanzania and the EAC region to greater heights.

**Rt Hon Prime Minister:** The Members and I similarly congratulate H.E. Dr John Pombe Magufuli, following his election as the 5<sup>th</sup> President of the United Republic of Tanzania. H.E. Dr Magufuli's victory in October 2015 is a step of great faith the people of the United Republic of Tanzania have in his leadership.

Before I venture on, further, today is the International Women's Day and its theme is Pledge for Parity. I congratulate Women of all walks of life; our Mothers, Daughters, Sisters and Wives for bearing with menfolk – but more fundamentally for their contribution to political, economic and social transformation of the globe. You all deserve to be celebrated this day!!

Today also presents an opportunity for you to deliver the State of EAC Address which is a unique and a fundamental activity on the calendar of the Community.

**Rt Hon Prime Minister:** In 2015, the Assembly held five Sittings in line with its principle of rotation in Bujumbura (March 2015), Arusha (June 2015), Kampala (August 2015), Nairobi (October 2015), and Kigali (November 2015). This year, we have already held one Sitting in Arusha, Tanzania.

In totality, we have since 2015 to date enacted 9 Bills, passed 13 Resolutions and adopted 24 Reports in addition to a number of questions posed to the Council of Ministers. We have also received 5 petitions on matters of concern to East Africans, three of which have been dispensed with.

At this Plenary Session, EALA shall debate on the EAC Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Bill, 2012, EAC Persons With Disabilities' Bill, 2015 and the EAC Supplementary Appropriation Bill, 2016. EALA will also analyze several oversight reports of its Committees, debate crucial on Motions and pass Resolutions.

The State of EAC Address that you will shortly deliver, sets the momentum and impetus for the integration process by reflecting on general policies that relate to the Community's progress while outlining the strategic challenges which require attention.

The novelty of the State of EAC Address dates back to the year 2008 when H.E. President Yoweri Museveni made the first inaugural Address to this Assembly in Arusha. The State of EAC Address has since then been institutionalised and all Heads of State have continuously honoured their respective invitations.

The rotational nature of the State of EAC Address, also makes it unique. In most instances, the occasion calls upon the Chairperson of the Summit of Heads of State to traverse the region to a neighbouring State from where EALA is sitting to deliver the speech. This very act exemplifies the very progressive nature of the integration process. It is in this vein that in March, 2015, H.E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete addressed EALA in Bujumbura, Burundi, as the then Chairperson of Summit of EAC Heads of State. I wish to express my appreciation to H.E. Dr. Kikwete.

**Rt Hon Prime Minister:** the Assembly is sitting against a backdrop of the 17<sup>th</sup> Summit of the EAC Heads of State last week that made exciting pronouncements for the region. As an Assembly, we welcome the admission of Republic of South Sudan and this move is expected to fortify the bloc. We look forward to such time that the Assembly welcomes on board legislators from the Republic of South Sudan.

The launch of the International East African E-Passport which takes effect in January 2017 is also laudable as we shall now enjoy freer and easier movement. There are also progressive steps to ban the importation of second hand clothes in a move that shall promote the local cotton, textile, apparel and leather industries in the region.

I proffer my appreciation to the Summit of EAC Heads of State for accepting our proposal to take advantage of the Summit Meetings as an opportune moment to Assent to Bills of the Assembly in line with Article 63 of the EAC

Treaty. We are very grateful the Summit of EAC Heads of State has in their wisdom positively received the request thus setting basis to efficiently assent to Bills.

Today, the EAC can lay claim to be the fastest growing economic bloc in the continent and the world, the challenges notwithstanding.

I congratulate the Partner States for assenting to the One Stop Border Bill, and the Axle Weight Control Bill, which were passed by EALA. It is in the same vein that we laud the EAC Heads of State Summit for agreeing to a 10-year Infrastructure Development Strategy which among other things, lays emphasis on Public-Private Partnership investments in railways, roads, ports and energy in the region. This puts our Community in good stead to strengthen the operations of our Customs Union and the Common Market.

It is however necessary for the EAC to instill quick interventions when it comes to the Common Market Protocol. As politicians we feel the tenets of the Common Market Protocol have not been fully met over the last five years. A sticking area concerns that of free movement of persons and the rights to residence. The EATUC and EAEO did petition EALA on the matter, of which was debated and passed by the House.

It is comforting to note the United Republic of Tanzania has committed to harmonise Work/Residence Permits, Fees, Forms and Procedures and some

initiatives are being undertaken in the review of Immigration Regulations of 1997 by restructuring fees for the purpose of providing preferential treatment to the citizens of EAC Partner States. We pray that speedy interventions are undertaken to enable citizens of the region to wholly benefit from the opportunities.

I note with great encouragement that the Republics of Rwanda, Kenya and Uganda did abolish work permit fees thus encouraging workers to move freely in search of opportunities. Movement of citizens within the three countries have also been eased following the recent introduction of the Inter-State Passes. So far this is working well and it is my firm belief that the model should in due course serve as a case study that can be extrapolated in the entire region.

EALA hopes 2016 shall be a year of reflection where Partner States shall indeed commit to catching up with the lost ground on the one side while consolidating on the gains on the other side.

It is similarly necessary to deal with bureaucratic processes, administrative restrictions, Non Tariff Barriers and misuse of the Rules of Origin principle among others, which hamper free movement of goods.

**Rt Hon Prime Minister**, May I take this opportunity to congratulate you for the progress in the United Republic of Tanzania since the new Government came into power in October 2015. In the first 100 days of H.E. Dr Magufuli's leadership, the country has realized major transformation. Revenue collection has doubled from Tshs 900 Billion to average of Tshs 1.4

Trillion per month, while you have similarly enhanced efficiency in service delivery in government institutions. Further to this, we are appreciative of the Government's desire and the renewed spirit to tackle and fight corruption head on.

**H.E. Dr Magufuli's** leadership style under the mantra of *Hapa Kazi tu* continues to be an inspiration to many given its focus towards addressing national and regional issues. EALA too, adds its voice in heralding you for the great achievement.

Before I invite you 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 you, Rt Hon Prime Minister, to address this *August* Assembly, today, Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2016. I thank you for your kind attention.