



## EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

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### EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)

**The Official Report of the Proceedings of the East African Legislative Assembly**  
**32<sup>ND</sup> SITTING – FOURTH MEETING – SECOND SESSION: FIFTH ASSEMBLY**

**Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2024**

*The East African Legislative Assembly met at 2.56 p.m. in the EAC Chamber, Arusha, Tanzania*

### PRAYER

*(The Speaker, Mr Joseph Ntakirutimana, in the Chair)*

*(The Assembly was called to order)*

### COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**The Speaker:** Honourable colleagues, good afternoon! I welcome you back to the continuation of our sittings.

This afternoon, I am pleased to introduce a team from Kenya, comprising Family Members of the Secretary General, the Hon. Veronica Mueni Nduva and Senior Government officials, who are here to witness the swearing in of the new Secretary General as she takes her Oath of Allegiance as a Member of EALA. The family members are:

1. Samuel Kona Epokhorr (Husband)
2. John Mambion
3. Eris John Lothike
4. Daniel Logilae
5. Samuel Nakope
6. Erastus EtheKon
7. Emuria Ewoton
8. Kithinji Kanyaura

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The senior Government officials of Kenya are:

1. Amb. Isaack Njenga, Kenya High Commissioner to the United Republic of Tanzania.
2. Ms. Teresia M. Malokwe, Principal Secretary for Devolution Office of the Deputy President.
3. Hon. Patrick Mariru, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Defence.
4. Ms Nancy Sifa, Charge De Affairs, Kenya Consulate in Arusha.

3.03

**Mr Mukulia Kennedy Aysason (South Sudan):** Procedure, Mr Speaker. I beg to move that rule 5(5) of the Rule of Procedure of the Assembly be suspended to allow more Members to accompany the new SG into the House.

**The Speaker:** Do you have seconders?

*(Seconded by Hon. David Sankok, Hon. Francoise Uwumukiza,  
Hon. Sadia James, Hon. Dr Makame Hasnuu)*

Please justify your Motion

**Mr Mukulia:** Mr Speaker, the position of Secretary General (SG) is very important and significant in the EAC to just let our new SG be accompanied by only two Members of the House. I, therefore, request that we suspend rule 5(5) of the House to allow for Members to accompany the new Secretary General.

**The Speaker:** I now put the question that rule 5(5) be suspended.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

**The Speaker:** Honourable members, I want to notify you that the new Secretary General of the East African Community, Hon. Veronica Mueni Nduva, is present and would like to take her seat in this House.

**Dr Abdulla Hasnuu Makame (Tanzania):** Procedure, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, we know that there are members online and that probably; there are some members online who have not taken oath. So, we would like you to ascertain which members are online. If there is a member who is online and has not taken oath, then the procedure of administration of oath has to extend to that person. If the member online has taken oath, then we just take note of their presence. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** I would like you to clarify what you mean. What do you mean?

**Dr Makame:** Mr Speaker, as we were walking into this gallery, the screen there was displaying some strangers whom we do not know and we suspect that there are some members online who are strangers or have not been introduced to the House.

**The Speaker:** I cannot see them; I did not see that.

**Dr Makame:** So, if you will, ask the person in IT to display members online; that is what I am requesting. It is very simple and very straightforward, so that we know who is online.

**The Speaker:** Online?

**Dr Makame:** Yes.

**The Speaker:** I cannot – I do not see anyone. Our IT staff, if there is anyone online who is not allowed to be with us, let them delete him. Let us continue.

I was saying that the new Secretary-General is present and would like to take her seat in this House. In accordance with rule 5(5) as suspended, she cannot sit or participate in the proceedings of the House, until she takes oath or affirmation of allegiance to the Treaty as a member of the Assembly. I, therefore, request that the members of the House who know the new member to present her to the Speaker to enable her to take oath. *(Applause)*

*(The Secretary-General, Ms Veronica Mueni Nduva, walks into the Chamber.)*

**The Speaker:** Thank you, honourable members. You can take your seat. I now invite Hon. Falhada Iman to introduce Hon. Veronica Mueni Nduva to the House. *(Applause)*

**Ms Falhada Dekow Iman (Kenya):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am here to introduce Hon. Nduva, the Secretary-General.

Hon. Nduva, the Secretary-General, has an impressive profile as a public servant. She has an admirable experience. She is the Secretary-General of the Community, effective 7 June 2024. Previously, she served as the Principal Secretary in various State Departments in the Republic of Kenya. She holds a Master of Arts in Communication and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Public Administration, both from the University of Nairobi. Further, Hon. Nduva has experience in human resource management. She has competence in bilateral relations, political strategy, communication and strategic thinking.

Hon. Nduva is an accomplished public sector governance professional with a 24-year career experience, spanning the Government of Kenya, the East African Community and civil society. *(Applause)* She possesses a concise and demonstrable understanding of government structures and operations, as well as inter-agency collaborations. Hon. Nduva played a lead role in the development of Kenya's Constitution and the national policy, an Action Plan on Human Rights Session paper. Her exemplary performance in public service earned her recognitions, including awards of the Chief of the Order of the Burning Spear (CBS). Mr Speaker, I am privileged and honoured to present Hon. Nduva to the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Now, I invite Hon. Veronica to take her oath. Can you please allow her to get her flag? Where is the flag?

## ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS

*The oaths were administered to Ms Veronica Mueni Nduva*

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Maybe, you can come back a little bit because we have to hear from you. Honourable members, we have to congratulate our new colleague. Personally, as a Speaker, I have to thank the Republic of Kenya because they have sent us a woman. For the first time, a woman will lead the EAC. *(Applause)*

The other thing is, she is not any woman; she is qualified. She has been a Principal Secretary, State Department for Performance and Delivery Management, Government of Kenya. Again, Principal Secretary, State Department for Gender and Affirmative Action, Government of Kenya. Women Caucus, you have to look for her; she will help you. Again, she has been a senior political specialist; very important. I cannot finish what she has been.

Hon. Veronica, you are welcome to the EAC. This House is proud of you and we are sure that the entire Community will benefit from your experience. Now, if you have something to tell us, you have the Floor. *(Applause)*

3.24

**Ms Veronica Mueni Nduva (The Secretary-General, East African Community):** Thank you very much. The Rt Hon. Joseph Ntakirutimana, Speaker, East African Legislative Assembly; the Hon. Deng Alor Kuol, Chairperson of the EAC Council of Ministers, the Hon. Peninah Malonza, the Minister of EAC, Republic of Kenya, honourable ministers, honourable Permanent and Principal Secretaries present; honourable members of the East African Legislative Assembly; Counsel to the Community; Clerk of the Assembly; invited dignitaries led by the Permanent Secretaries and my husband, Samuel Kona Epokhor, members of the Fourth Estate; Good afternoon.

It is with great honour that I stand before you today as an ex-officio member of this esteemed Assembly. This role presents a unique opportunity for enhanced collaboration between the EAC Secretariat and the Assembly. From the outset, I wish to express my heartfelt appreciation to the Summit of the East African Community Heads of State for entrusting me with the significant responsibility as the Secretary-General of the Community.

I further extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Republic of Kenya for successfully nominating me to this significant position. I thank my family, colleagues and friends who have stood with me and supported me up to where I am today.

Mr Speaker and honourable members, the East African Community thrives on the strength of its organs and institutions. As a legislative arm, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) plays a pivotal role in the functioning and success of our Community. I commit to working closely with the Assembly, building on the strong foundation you have established, as we strive to achieve the noble aspirations enshrined in the Treaty.

Mr Speaker and honourable members, as I take on the responsibilities of the Secretary-General, I pledge to work alongside you in pursuing these critical goals; deepening economic integration,

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strengthening political cooperation, enhancing social cohesion and institutional strengthening, including enhancing inter-organ and inter-institutional coordination.

As an ex-officio member, I am committed to fostering a productive engagement with the members of the Assembly, and enhancing the role and visibility of the EALA within our Community. *(Applause)* Together, let us ensure our policies are well informed and geared towards the advancement of the East African Community.

Mr Speaker and honourable members, I wish to express my deep appreciation for the support that I have received from the Rt Hon. Speaker, members of this august House, including the Women Caucus –*(Applause)*- since I started my tenure.

To the citizens of the East African Community, I am honoured to serve you and I pledge to do so with integrity, dedication –*(Applause)*- and unwavering commitment to our shared vision.

Mr Speaker, honourable members and honourable ministers, I thank you for your attention. Thank you so much, *merci beaucoup* and have a good afternoon. *(Applause)*

**The Speaker:** Thank you, honourable SG. *Karibu sana.*

## PAPERS

**The Speaker:** Chairperson of the Council of Ministers, lay the financial statement.

### 3.01

**Mr Deng Alor Kuol (The Minister of East African Community Affairs - South Sudan):** Mr Speaker – *(Interruption)*

**Mr Kim Gai Rut (South Sudan):** Procedure, Mr Speaker. The Chair of Council needs to stand up when he is moving the motion. *(Laughter)*

**The Speaker:** Yes, this is the rule.

**Mr Musamali:** Procedure, Mr Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Honourable minister?

**Mr Musamali:** Procedure, Mr Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Yes, Hon. Musamali?

**Mr Musamali:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. As the minister comes in, I thought that having received the new Secretary-General in this House, it would have been procedurally correct for either one or two members to welcome her, on behalf of the rest of us. As you are aware, the new Secretary-

General is coming in at a time when we really need her. *(Applause)* So, Mr Speaker, I was just begging that we –

**The Speaker:** Do you mean a vote of thanks?

**Honourable Members:** Yes. *(Applause)*

**The Speaker:** Can you do it, Hon. Musamali? [*Hon. Millya: Procedure, Mr Speaker*] Honourable, do you want procedure there?

**Mr Millya:** Mr Speaker, let us ask Hon. Musamali to finish the job he started very well in Nairobi –*(Laughter)*– and on our behalf. Let us allow him and Hon. Anne Itto to do it. *Asante sana.*

**The Speaker:** Hon. Musamali, you have the Floor but please, be brief because we have a lot of things to do today.

3.32

**Mr Paul Mwasa Musamali (Uganda):** Thank you, Mr Speaker and members of this House for entrusting me with this difficult job of welcoming the new Secretary-General. Hon. Secretary-General, you are welcome to the East African Legislative Assembly as an ex-officio member. I want to bring to your attention three things again.

One is that you are the fulcrum; you are the centre. You are the accounting officer. You are at the apex of the East African Community and the people of East Africa are looking at you for us to achieve our integration agenda. *(Applause)* As you may be aware, the integration of East Africa and Africa is a matter of life. It is a matter of necessity; it is not a matter of luxury. *(Applause)* Therefore, whoever occupies the position of Secretary-General, you have to take it seriously.

Just like you have noted that you have come with unwavering commitment on our shared mission, the people of East Africa are yearning for a fully integrated East Africa, where people are free to trade freely and are free to move. We also expect a single currency and ultimately, one political federation. *(Applause)*

The last one and the most important is that the Community has very limited resources and we have been grappling with issues of accountability. Rt Hon. Secretary-General, do not dip your hands in the pockets of the Community because as a body that is entrusted in overseeing the activities of this Community, we shall not waver.

You are welcome but for your information, so far, we have started on a good note. We are very grateful. *(Applause)* I am sure that your tenure is going to be a smooth one. Thank you very much. *Karibu sana. (Applause)*

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Hon. Musamali, for your vote of thanks. I now give the Floor to Dr Anne Itto, the Chair for the Women's Caucus. Please, be brief.

3.36

**Dr Anne Itto Leonardo (South Sudan):** On behalf of the women in this Parliament and the “He for she” –(Applause)– I would like to welcome Hon. Veronica, our new Secretary-General. It is very historical for us and I hope more will happen in other sections and organs that more women will be put in charge.

You have heard from my colleague; our concern has been working in collaboration. Our concern has been leaving the pockets of the East African Community safe and effective use of the hard-earned resources of the citizens of East Africa. We are happy that you came very clear with your intentions. We welcome it and we will work with you. Hand in hand, I hope this will be the beginning of a much better time. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker and everybody, for the warm welcome of the SG.

Lastly, as the chair of the Women's Caucus, we are hoping that the gender imbalances in employment and in recruitment will be addressed effectively, so that we see ourselves in you. Thank you. (Applause)

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Hon. Dr Itto. Now, I will go back to the honourable minister, Chair of the Council of Ministers to lay your financial statement.

### LAYING OF PAPERS

#### 3.39

**Mr Deng Alor Kuol (The Minister of East African Community Affairs - South Sudan):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the financial statements and statements of expenditures for the supplementary budget for the financial year 2023/2024. I also lay the financial statements to support the budget of the financial year 2024/2025. I lay the financial statements to support the budget of the financial year 2024-2025. I also lay on the Table the estimates of expenditure for the financial year 2024-2025. I beg to lay.

**The Speaker:** Please, lay.

### BILLS FIRST READING THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL, 2024

#### 3.40

**Mr Deng Alor Kuol (The Minister of East African Community Affairs - South Sudan):** Mr Speaker, in accordance -

**The Speaker:** I had to call you to move the motion.

**Mr Kuol:** Yes, to move the motion.

**The Speaker:** Yes.

**Mr Kuol:** I beg to move the motion that the East African Community Supplementary Appropriation Bill, 2024, be read for the first time.

**The Speaker:** Do you have seconders? You are seconded by Hon. Francoise, Hon. Dr Woda and others. Thank you.

*(Seconded by Hon Amb Fatuma Ndangiza, Hon Dr Woda Jeremiah, Hon David Sankok)*

**Mr Kuol:** Mr Speaker, in accordance with Rule 66 of the Rules-

**The Speaker:** I think-

THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL, 2024,  
A BILL FOR AN ACT OF THE COMMUNITY TO APPROPRIATE A SUM OF USD  
11,148,996 OUT OF THE BUDGET OF THE COMMUNITY TO MEET ADDITIONAL  
EXPENDITURE FOR THE SPECIFIED ORGANS AND INSTITUTIONS OF THE  
COMMUNITY FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2024.

**The Speaker:** I refer this Bill to the Committee on General Purpose.

**BILLS**  
**FIRST READING**  
**THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY APPROPRIATION BILL, 2024**

**The Speaker:** The Chairperson of the Council of Ministers, move the motion.

3.42

**Mr Deng Alor Kuol (The Minister of East African Community Affairs -South Sudan):** Mr Speaker, in accordance with Rule 66 of the Rules of Procedure of this Assembly, I move that the East African Community Appropriation Bill, 2024, be read for the first time.

**The Speaker:** Seconders, we have the Counsel to the Community (CTC), Hon. Kim Gai, the Secretary General (SG), Hon. Gideon, Hon. Clement and Hon. Luke.

*(Seconded by Hon Kim Gai, Hon Veronica Nduva (SG) and Hon Gideon Gatpan)*

A BILL FOR AN ACT OF THE COMMUNITY TO APPROPRIATE A SUM OF USD  
112,984,442 OUT OF THE BUDGET OF THE COMMUNITY TO MEET EXPENDITURE  
FOR THE ORGANS AND INSTITUTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY FOR THE FINANCIAL  
YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2025.

**The Speaker:** I refer the Bill to the same committee; Committee on General Purpose.

**THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY BUDGET SPEECH**

**The Speaker:** Chair of the Council of Ministers, move the motion.

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3.43

**Mr Deng Alor Kuol (The Minister of East African Community Affairs, South Sudan):** Mr Speaker, I move that this Assembly do resolve itself into a committee of ways and means to consider and approve the financial statements of the financial year 2024/2025 and be a Committee of Supply to consider and approve the revised estimates of expenditure of the financial year 2023/2024 and revenue and estimates for the financial year 2024/2025. I beg to move.

**The Speaker:** Do you have seconders? Yes, Hon. Sankok, Hon. Mathias, Dr Woda and others. Honourable minister, you can proceed to read the budget speech.

3.44

**Mr Deng Alor Kuol (The Minister of East African Community Affairs, South Sudan)** Mr Speaker, the Secretary General of the Community prepared the East African Budget based on guidelines which the Council approved. Before this Assembly proceeds to consider the provided revised estimates for the financial year 2023/2024 and the budget for the financial year 2024/2025, I have the honour of informing you of the achievements of the previous budgets and the policy direction of the next financial year to be contained in my budget speech; I now present the budget speech of the year 2024 as follows;

Mr Speaker, I beg to move that this Assembly resolves into a House Committee to debate and approve the proposals by the Council of Ministers for the budget of the East African Community for the Financial Year 2024-2025.

The theme of this year's budget is; *Sustainable Economic Transformation through Fiscal Consolidation and Investment in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation for Improved Livelihoods.*

Mr Speaker, in this budget speech, I shall present the following;

- i) An overview of the region's economic performance and outlook;
- ii) Review of East African Community Program Performance for the Financial Year 2023-2024 and the priorities for Financial Year 2024-2025;
- iii) The audit report of the Financial Year 2022-2023; and
- iv) The East African Community Budget for the Financial Year 2024-2025, also highlighting priority interventions, expected outcomes, budget proposals and allocation to organs and institutions and budget assumptions.

Mr Speaker, trade is the hinge around which the East African Community (EAC) integration process revolves. The EAC's total trade with the rest of the world increased by 2.37 per cent to USD 80.6 billion in 2023, compared to USD 78.7 billion in 2022. East African Community exports to the rest of the world improved by 7.8 per cent to USD 26.9 billion, while EAC imports from the rest of the world slightly declined by 0.1 per cent to USD 53.6 billion, Intra-East Africa trade grew by 13.1 per cent to USD 12.1 billion.

Key products traded among partner states include cereals, cement, iron and steel, livestock, petroleum products, sugar, food and beverages.

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## Economic Performance and Outlook

Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity to highlight the state of the East African Community economics or economies. The budget estimates for the Financial Year 2024-2025, are being presented at a time when the EAC economies are experiencing unfavourable global financial conditions, negative spill-overs from geopolitical conflicts and the impact of climate change that continue to weigh on the partner states' economic performance. In addition, the region is navigating through high fuel and food import prices, costly financial market access and pressures on the exchange rates and foreign reserves.

In spite of these challenges, economic performance in East African region in 2023 continued to improve, recording GDP growth rates ranging from 2.8 per cent to 8.1 percent. Partner States' economies are projected to continue improving with economic growth in 2024 expected to be higher than the global and Sub-Saharan African growth rates of 3.2 per cent and 3.8 per cent respectively. This robust growth is expected to be driven by strong performance in most sectors, supported by sustained public investment, improved export performance, as well as measures to spur private sector investment.

### Review of East African Community Program Performance for Financial Year 2023-2024 and priorities for Financial Year 2024-2025

Mr Speaker, this august House approved a budget USD 103,842,880 for the community for the Financial Year 2023-2024 in October 2023. Subsequently, supplementary appropriation Bills were tabled for consideration and approval.

The performance on implementation of the above budget by the EAC, organs and institutions as well as the plans for the Financial Year 2024-2025 is as follows;

#### EAC Secretariat

##### Customs Union

#### a. Implementation of the Single Customs Territory

Mr Speaker, the Community launched the East African Community e-Tariff platform that digitalises the EAC Common External Tariff (CET) hence improving private sector participation and access to trade information. The platform also facilitates seamless administration of the Duty Remission Scheme, management of preferential tariff treatment on originating goods and provides searchable functionalities of the EAC CET for users.

A verification mission was conducted to resolve market access issues regarding commodities traded between the Republic of Uganda and the Republic of South Sudan. Similar verification missions are planned for other border posts in the region.

#### b. Trade matters

In compliance with the terms of the EAC Treaty and its Protocols, the Community implemented measures to improve trade within the region as well as market access for exports and trade with

third countries. Such mechanisms include elimination of Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) and participation in the African Continental Free Trade Area. Specifically;

- i. Out of the 16 reported NTBs in the period, the Community resolved six NTBs. The remaining 10 NTBs are at different stages of resolution. In addition, the Community developed and operationalised the EAC Elimination of NTB's mobile application to ease reporting, monitoring and elimination of NTBs;
- ii. Implementation of a comprehensive awareness and capacity-building program in different trade areas;
- iii. Convening of the 23<sup>rd</sup> EAC Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) Trade Fair in Bujumbura, Burundi, which attracted 1,031 exhibitors from the partner states, trade facilitation institutions and development partners;
- iv. Adoption of the EAC strategy on implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTFA) Agreement and the approval of negotiations for Free Trade Area Agreements with the following countries, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Pakistan, Singapore, Turkey, the People's Republic of China and Serbia.

Mr Speaker, in the Financial Year 2023-2024, the Community hosted the 14<sup>th</sup> African Union Private Sector Forum to strengthen the linkages between regional and continental markets for increased trade and investment; hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> East African Business and Investment Summit and Expo, 2023 in an effort to identify necessary policy reforms and leverage opportunities for increased trade and investment; built the capacity of partner states' officials from Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) and Export Promotion/Processing Zones (EPZs) towards promoting East Africa as a single investment destination.

In the Financial Year 2023-2024, the Community harmonized 172 standards and reviewed the Regional Standardisation Plan with specific concentration to national and regional priorities and the AfCFTA.

Mr Speaker, in the FY 2024-2025, the customs and trade sector will focus on the following key areas:

- i. Consolidating and updating the regulatory framework for the Single Customs Territory, implementing the EAC Customs Bond to cover risk on goods in transit and warehousing, and integrating the Northern and Central Corridor Electronic Cargo Tracking Systems (ECTSs);
- ii. Concluding Mutual Recognition Arrangement of the Authorised Economic Operator Program with selected trading partners and capacity building for trade, particularly small cross-border traders, mainly youth and women;
- iii. Implementation of the EAC strategy on AfCFTA, harmonising of legislation for cross-border e-Commerce negotiations of Free Trade Area Agreements with selected third countries and operationalisation of Regional Trade Promotions Network.;

- iv. Capacity building for stakeholders on the NTBs Elimination Mobile Application;
- v. Finalizing an EAC Investment Strategy, EAC Investment Guide, EAC Private Sector Development Policy and developing an EAC e-Business Registry; and
- vi. Harmonizing and adopting 150 standards of commonly traded goods and development of Standardisation, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing (SQMT) Regulations.

#### Common market

- a. Tracking the implementation of commitments under the EAC Common Market Protocol

Mr Speaker, in the FY 2023-2024, the Community continued to track partner states' progress in amending national laws, regulations and administrative guidelines impacting on the key freedoms and rights under the EAC Common Market Protocol. I am happy to report that some reforms have been realised and that the process will continue in the FY 2024-2025.

- b. Infrastructure development

#### Railways

Mr Speaker, the railways sub-sector experienced growth at the national and regional levels during the FY 2023-2024. The Standard Gauge Railway Development Program saw the rollout of several projects along the Central Corridor. Construction commenced along the Dodoma (Makutupora) – Isaka, Isaka – Kigali and Tabora – Kigoma lines. Works also commence along a line connecting Tanzania and Burundi, the Uvinza – Msongati line.

#### Roads

Mr Speaker, in the roads subsector, the Community completed the detailed designs for the Multinational Tanzania/Burundi: Luhafwe – Uvinza, 132 kilometres; Uvinza – Kanyani, 60 kilometres; Kumsenga – Kifura, 25 kilometres; Mabamba – Kusenga, 19.5 kilometres; Ngarama – Gisuru, 45 kilometres; Rusengo – Nyabitare, 15 kilometres; Gitega – Makebuko, 25 kilometres and Cankuzo – Gahumo, 50 kilometres; roads that link Tanzania and Burundi.

Feasibility studies also commenced on the proposed Kenya-Uganda Expressway: Kisumu Bypass, 31 kilometres and Jinja – Malaba, 138 kilometres. Busitema Spur, 17 kilometres road. The project will further assess improvements to the Mbale (Bumbobi) – Lwakhakha – (Laughter) – Kimaeti section, 25 kilometres.

The Secretariat further secured USD 1.7 million to carry out detailed designs on the Multinational Burundi/Rwanda which is the Kanyaru/Akanyaru Belt Roads: Ngozi (Mwumbe) – Nyamureza – Ntega - Kirondo, 66 kilometres/Akanyaru Bas – These are difficult names- Nyaruteja – Kibirizi, Gisagara – Nyamiyaga, 110 kilometres.

In the Financial Year 2024-2025, the Community will continue with funds mobilisation for new projects and convene the Fifth Retreat of the East African Head of State on Infrastructure Development and Financing.

### Civil Aviation and Airports

Mr Speaker, in the Financial Year 2023/2024, the Community achieved the following:

- i. Completed the EAC Upper Seamless Operations Project phase one which aims to enable the interoperability of navigation infrastructure systems among the Partner States, upper aerial space, which is the flight level space above 24,200 feet above sea level;
- ii. Developed a road map for implementation of phase two of the project; and
- iii. Domesticated consumer protection and facilitation regulations to facilitate the implementation of the Single African air transport market in the region.

Mr Speaker, in the Financial Year 2024/2025, the Community will:

- i. Continue with the development and domestication of regulations and mechanisms to facilitate the implementation of the Single African Air Transport Market in the region.
- ii. Commence implementation of the EAC Upper Airspace Seamless Operation Project phase two
- iii. Operationalise the Regional Aircraft Accident Investigation Search and Rescue and harmonise the curricular for aviation training organisations operating under civil aviation authorities.

### Metrology

Mr Speaker, in the Financial Year 2023/2024, the Community continued to expand the meteorological infrastructure to enhance early warning systems for severe weather incidents such as thunder storms, floods and strong winds.

Mr Speaker, in the Financial Year 2024/2025, the Community will focus on developing strategies aimed at improving meteorological services and the protection of more accurate and timely weather forecast to support implementation of the blue economy and other socio-economic activities.

### Communications

Mr Speaker, in the Financial Year 2023/2024, the United Republic of Tanzania commenced implementation of the roaming framework hence joining the Republic of Kenya, Republic of Rwanda, Republic of South Sudan and the Republic of Uganda.

The other Partner States continued with the necessary preparations and processes towards the implementation of the roaming framework.

The Community is also working with COMESA and SADC in the implementation of enhancement and governance and enabling environment of ICT sector programme and carried out detailed studies on roaming and inter connection as well as optic fibre infrastructure development.

The Community convened the 10<sup>th</sup> East African Internet Governance Forum in September, 2023 in Kigali, Rwanda. The forum enhances the need for affordable and inclusive internet access to drive the region's digital economy through strategic partnerships among ICT experts, governments and private sector.

Mr Speaker, in the Financial Year 2024/2025, the Community will develop the broadcast content framework and cross-border inter-connection regulations to facilitate EAC citizens, especially youths in local content development and production.

The EGEE ICT programme will focus on development of policies to support private sector participation in ICT infrastructure development, universal access, e-commerce and data protection and capacity building for regional ICT associations.

#### Private Sector

##### Agriculture and Food Security

Mr Speaker, agriculture extension systems are plagued by low numbers of extension agents with limited capacities. In an effort to address these challenges, the Community secured funding from the African Development Bank for the implementation of enabling sustainable regional agricultural extension project.

The project seeks to increase the long term sustainability of agriculture in the region by increasing access to robust extension advisors or services.

Mr Speaker, for the Financial Year 2024/2025, under the agricultural sector, the Community will focus on:

- i. Strengthening co-ordination and implementation of harmonised regional policies, strategies, guidelines and legislation to increase sustainable and inclusive agricultural productivity and intra-regional trade of agricultural commodities;
- ii. Coordination of implementation projects to improve delivery systems for agricultural inputs and technologies; and
- iii. Enhancing integrated management of trans-boundary crop and animal pests and diseases in the region.

##### Industrialisation and small, Medium Enterprises Development

Mr Speaker, the region continues to undertake monitoring, evaluation and corrective actions towards implementation of the leather, fruits and vegetables and pharmaceutical sector strategies and action plans.

The Community launched the EAC Jumuiya Automotive Industry planned for - Jumuiya from Juma... It sounds Arabic.

The JAIP will serve as a regional multi-stakeholder forum to discuss, provide advice and inputs on policy formulation to reduce implementation of the action plan for the development of the automotive industry in the region.

Mr Speaker, the region aims to increase trade in sweet potato through support by the German Meteorology Institute, PTB. The East African Community will undertake capacity development of training of trainers on the use of sweet potato laboratory equipment donated by GIZ.

Mr Speaker, in 2023, the East African Community mobilised funding for PTB to undertake a project on strengthening the quality infrastructure for the leather and fruits and vegetables sector for the period 2023/2026. Activities under the project include capacity building in the utilisation of qualified or quality management self- assessment tools for Small and Medium Enterprises and

Partner States national bureau of standards to improve the production of quality leather shoes and goods,

Mr Speaker, the East African Community continued with the implementation of priority energy generation and transmission projects. The Tanzania-Kenya 400 kilowatt interconnection line that is part of the Zambia-Tanzania-Kenya power interconnection project was completed and commissioned in February 2024.

Mr Speaker, implementation of the East African crude oil pipeline from Hoima, Uganda to Tanga, Tanzania is currently underway with activities such as land acquisition, site preparation and initial infrastructure development being undertaken by both the Republic of Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Mr Speaker, preparations for the 11<sup>th</sup> East African Petroleum Conference and Exhibition 2025 have commenced. The biannual conference serves as a platform for stakeholders in the petroleum industry to share knowledge, discuss challenges and opportunities and collaborate on strategies for sustainable development of the sector in the region. The conference is scheduled for 5-7 March 2025 in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.

Mr Speaker, in the Financial Year 2024/2025, the Community will continue implementing the energy generation and transmission projects and the promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies.

#### Environment and Natural Resources

Mr Speaker, during the Financial Year 2023/2024, the Community recorded the following achievements:

- i. Convened a high level forum of the East African Community Heads of State on Climate Change and Food Security on the sidelines of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Ordinary Summit in November 2023. The forum committed to increase investment in climate-smart agriculture and renewable energy to mitigate the impact of climate change and attain food security in the region.
- ii. The forum also adopted a joint position for Partner States on the 28<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties on the United Nations Convention on Climate Change that was held in November-December 2023 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Mr Speaker, in the Financial Year 2023/2024/2025, the priorities for the environment and natural resources management sector will be to:

- i. Finalise for adoption the EAC Water Policy and Integrated Water Resources Management Strategy;
- ii. Finalise for adoption the EAC Blue Economic Strategy and Action Plan;
- iii. Finalise a review of the EAC Regional Diversity Strategy and Action Plan; and
- iv. Review the EAC Climate Change Policy and Strategy.

#### Tourism and Wildlife Development

Mr Speaker, the Community has continued to implement the EAC Tourism Marketing Strategy. Beyond the period under review, an EAC tourism destination brand, “Visit East Africa, Feel the

Vibe” was adopted and launched during the third EAC Tourism Expo that took place in November 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya.

Mr Speaker, in May 2023, the Community, in collaboration with the EU and GIZ, the German Agency for International Cooperation, launched the EAC Tourism Capacity Development Programme.

The programme aims to elevate professional standards and skills set across the region’s industry. This online free training programme offers a blend of self-based learning and live sessions with regional experts.

The review of the EAC classification criteria for tourism establishments including hotels, resorts, lodges, tented camps, motels, boutique hotels, villas, cottages and serviced apartments as well as convention centres was concluded.

Mr Speaker, under the wildlife subsector, the Community adopted the EAC Wildlife Conservation and Management Policy as well as the economic valuation of national capacity in priority and trans-boundary landscapes.

Mr Speaker, for the Financial Year 2024/2025, the sector’s priorities will be:

- i. Finalise for adoption the protocol on tourism and wildlife management;
- ii. Convene the first East African Community regional tourism expo;
- iii. Implement the EAC classification criteria for tourism, accommodation establishment;
- iv. Promote the EAC tourism destination brand at regional and international tourism fairs and through various digital platforms including e-learning;
- v. Finalise for adoption the youth programme for tourism and wildlife and establish a trans-boundary and wildlife conservation areas network.

Mr Speaker, the Community remains cognisant of the need to promote labour migration governance, effective regulation, protection of migration workers’ rights and maximising the benefits of labour migration within and beyond the Community.

In the Financial Year 2024/2025, the Regional Policy on Labour Migration will be finalised for adoption and implementation - Come and take it from here.

**The Speaker:** Chair, do you need an assistant?

**Mr Kuol:** Yes, I think she can come.

**The Speaker:** Good, she can come. How many pages do you have? You have the floor, honourable minister. *(Applause)*

4.33

**Ms Peninah Malonza (Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of East African Community, ASALs and Regional Development, Kenya):** Mr Speaker, during the period under review, the Community successfully organised the East Africa Early Childhood Development Conference in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania in March, 2024. In the Financial Year 2024/2025, the focus will be:

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- i. Creating a comprehensive action plan to implement the ECD call for action on innovative early childhood interventions;
- ii. Training of staff on mainstreaming gender in the implementation of East Africa programmes and projects;
- iii. Contacting the third gender participatory audit;
- iv. Convening the sixth edition of JAMAFEST, the biannual East African cultural festival in Juba, South Sudan in September 2024.

On health, the Community developed the East African Regional Health Data Governance Framework that will improve access to quality health data from all Partner States and collective response to outbreaks and other health threats.

The Community also adopted the East African Community Non-Communicable Diseases Strategic Framework 2024-2030 with the aim of reducing the premature mortality due to NCDs by 20 per cent in the Partner States by 2030.

On education, science and technology, the Summit has continued to recognise and award prizes to the secondary school winners of the East African Essay Writing Competition on an annual basis. The essay writing competition is part of the broader East Africa Outreach Programme aimed at involving students in the activities of the Community and fostering the East African identity.

During the 23<sup>rd</sup> Ordinary Summit held on November 2023, the winners of the 2022 edition were presented with their awards. The regional winners for the 2023 essay writing competition will be presented with their awards during the next financial year.

Mr Speaker, the Community recognises the need to promote specialised technical and vocational education and training skills particularly in transport, energy and manufacturing including agro-processing and ICT to support the region's industrialisation and integration agenda.

In this regard, the Community adopted the East African TVET harmonisation strategy in November 2023. The strategy will enable the Partner States to facilitate mutual recognition of credit transfer modalities and frameworks for students, teachers and mobile labour and the provision of increased opportunities to access better quality education and training services in the region.

In the Financial Year 2024/2025, the Community will focus on the implementation of the TVET harmonisation strategy.

On Monetary Union, cooperation in statistics harmonisation and development, Mr Speaker, in order to aid the harmonisation of statistics in the region, eight regional guidelines for compilation of specific statistics domains were approved in the Financial Year 2023/2024 and the development of the compatible software for compilation of consumer price index was completed.

In the Financial Year 2024/2025, the focus will be on:

- i. Implementation of approved regional compilation guidelines;
- ii. Dissemination of available harmonised statistics on East African statistics portal,

- iii. Role of the compatible CPI software
- iv. Support to Partner States to adopt modern tools for data dissemination and sharing; and
- v. Development of two additional regional guidelines for compilation of statistics on priority domains.

On the implementation of the road map for the East African Monetary Union, Mr Speaker, during the Financial Year 2023/2024, the Community continued to implement the revised road map for the East African Monetary Union and the following achievements were recorded:

- i. Development of the East African Monetary Policy Communications Strategy; and
- ii. Development of framework for monitoring the implementation of EAMU road map.

On the implementation of payments and settlement systems in the region, the Partner States' central banks continued to implement secure, efficient and reliable payment and settlement systems to ensure efficient flow of transactions within the region.

The East African Community Payment and Settlement Systems Integration Project provides connectivity to all Partner States central banks by linking their real time growth settlement systems to the East African Payment System and support capacity building programmes in areas of payment settlement systems operations for central bank staff.

On political federation, Mr Speaker, fair and credible elections are crucial for the stability of the region. The Community congratulates the Democratic Republic of the Congo for conducting a peaceful general election in December 2023.

In the Financial Year 2024/2025, the Community will deploy election observation missions to the general elections in the Republic of Rwanda scheduled for July 2024, Republic of South Sudan in December 2024 and elections in the Republic of Burundi in May 2025.

On Peace and Security, during the period under review, the Community adopted a strategic framework on trans-boundary security with a focus on trans-boundary Communities. The objective of the framework is to integrate trans-boundary communities in the regional security arrangements in a structured manner. Its implementation will promote proximate trans-boundary movement based on good practices like the *Ujirani Mwema* across the region. In the Financial Year 2024/2025, the Community will focus on the implementation of the framework.

Mr Speaker, in partnership with the EU, the Community strengthened the security of her borders with a view to monitor, prevent, protect, and disrupt transnational organised crime. In addition, the INTERPOL 1-24/7 communication system was extended to the 83 gazetted Partner States' border posts, international airports and sea ports.

The Community under the leadership of H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, the former President of the Kenya and the facilitator of the EAC-led Nairobi Process, played a critical role in efforts to restore peace and security in eastern DRC. The Nairobi Process implemented a two-track approach – political intervention and military/security enforcement – which were complementary and undertaken simultaneously.

The political track interventions assisted in promoting dialogue among stakeholders drawn from the armed groups, civil society and faith-based groups, with the goal of creating the right foundation for long-term solutions. Under the military track, there was full deployment of the East African Community Regional Force troops in the joint operation area.

On International Relations, Mr Speaker, I am happy to inform you that the Federal Republic of Somalia, after being admitted into the EAC by the 23rd Ordinary Summit of the EAC Heads of State on 24 November 2023, became a full member of the Community on 8 March 2024 after depositing her instrument of ratification with the Secretary General.

#### Defence Sector

Mr Speaker, our Defence Forces continue to cooperate in military training, joint operations, technical cooperation, cultural and sporting activities aimed at promoting peace and security in the region.

Partner States' Defence Forces conducted the 13<sup>th</sup> EAC Armed Forces FTX *USHIRIKIANO IMARA* 2024 in Rwanda. The objective of the exercise was to enhance the Forces' capabilities, inter-operability and readiness in undertaking real joint operations.

Mr Speaker, the key priorities for the Financial Year 2024/2025 will be to:

- i. undertake Civil Military Cooperation activities in the Republic of Burundi; and
- ii. convene the EAC Military Games and Cultural Event in the Republic of South Sudan.

#### Cross-Cutting Sectors

##### Information and Communications Technology

The Community continued with the implementation of the Information and Communication Technology policy and strategy to guide the efficient use of ICT resources.

In the Financial Year 2024/2025, the priorities will be to: integrate EAC ICT Systems; harmonise and develop regional cyber security and data protection frameworks; and strengthen the enabling environment to support digital integration in the region.

#### Visibility and Sensitisation Programmes

On visibility and awareness creation, the focus was on sensitisation programmes aimed at delivering the integration message to various stakeholders and EAC citizens to ensure inclusivity and participation in line with people-centred integration as envisaged in the Treaty.

The Community continues to empower journalists from across the region through training workshops with the knowledge and tools necessary to accurately report on EAC activities, thereby enhancing public understanding and support for regional initiatives. In this regard, the Secretariat convened a two-day Media Training Workshop on EAC integration for 25 journalists from seven Partner States in November 2023.

The Community also heightened its social media presence, which boosted visibility and public awareness on Community projects and programmes by facilitating real-time updates and

engagements with various stakeholders and EAC citizens. This social media presence has allowed the Community to effectively disseminate information about the integration agenda.

In the Financial Year 2024/2025, the priorities will be to: implement the EAC Communication Policy and the EAC Communication Strategy 2021/2022 – 2025/2026; commemorate the EAC's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary or Silver Jubilee celebrations; enhance EAC's presence on social media; improve media relations through training of journalists on better news reporting and analysis of the integration process; and launch and embark on the popularisation of the new EAC Brand Identity.

#### Cooperation in Legal and Judicial Affairs

Mr Speaker, in the Financial Year 2024/2025, the Council will:

- i. Introduce amendments to the EAC Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency Act, 2009 to further empower the Board of the Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency (CASSOA) as a self-accounting institution of the Community;
- ii. Continue to support all initiatives in respect of judicial education, training and harmonisation as championed by the East African Judicial Education Committee; and
- iii. support the harmonisation of Partner States' laws to conform with the EAC Treaty and protocols.

Mr Speaker, on resource mobilisation, the Community mobilised support from Development Partners to complement the Partner States' contributions by securing funding to the tune of \$44 million. Financing agreements in the form of direct and indirect grants were signed to support various EAC projects and programmes.

On East African Legislative Assembly, Mr Speaker, the Council appreciates the contribution of the Assembly in furthering the objectives and ideals of our integration process. In line with its legislative, oversight and representative functions, EALA has continued to pass legislation, undertake oversight missions, consider petitions and adopt resolutions and recommendations towards improving EAC governance system.

The Assembly held three scheduled plenary meetings including the three special sittings. In line with its legislative functions, the Assembly:

- i. Passed the following Bills: the East African Community Supplementary Appropriation Bill, 2023; the East African Community Supplementary (No. 2) Bill, 2023; and the East African Community Appropriation Bill, 2023;
- ii. Granted leave to three Private Members' Bills, namely: the East African Community Financial Management Bill, 2023; the East African Community Sexual and Reproductive Health Bill, 2024; and the East African Community Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2024.

Under its oversight function, the Assembly adopted a number of recommendations aimed at improving the overall performance of the Community in the implementation of the integration agenda. The reports of the Assembly were also transmitted to the national legislatures of the Partner States and other key stakeholders to inform their necessary action.

The Assembly was honoured to receive two members of the Summit of the EAC Heads of State during its rotational sittings in the Republic of Rwanda in November 2023 and the Republic of Kenya in March 2024. Their Excellencies President Paul Kagame and President Dr William

Samoei Ruto emphasised the importance of regional integration in achieving a prosperous, competitive, secure, stable and politically united East Africa.

In the Financial Year 2024/2025, the Assembly has prioritised the following:

- i. Enactment of the pending Bills that are a prerequisite for the establishment of the East African Monetary Union;
- ii. Enhancing the Assembly's oversight function to ensure that the East African citizenry benefit fully from the full implementation of the Common Market Protocol;
- iii. Receiving and inducting EALA Members from the Federal Republic of Somalia into the Assembly;
- iv. Strengthening the Assembly's collaboration with National Legislatures to enhance popular participation of people in the integration through their elected representatives;
- v. Convening the 18<sup>th</sup> EAC Bureau of Speakers in Nairobi, Kenya; and
- vi. Convening the 14<sup>th</sup> EAC Inter-Parliamentary Games in December 2024 in Mombasa, Kenya.

3.3.

On East African Court Of Justice, Mr Speaker, 87 matters were filed before the court during the period under review. The court has continued to witness goodwill by the Partner States in implementing the Court's decisions, which builds confidence among East Africans with regard to respect for the rule of law and justice delivery in the region.

For the first time since its establishment, the court received matters filed by Partner States against other Partner States. This is a show of confidence by the Partner States in the court as the judicial arm of the Community.

Mr Speaker, the court continued to enhance awareness and access to information on its role in dispute settlement. In collaboration with UNESCO, the court conducted the 2nd Regional Media Training of editors and journalists on judicial reporting in the EAC that attracted 30 media practitioners from the Partner States. The main objective of the training was to enhance capacity of the media to ensure more accurate reporting on EACJ matters.

On Lake Victoria Basin Commission, the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) has made strides in improving water quality in the Lake Victoria Basin through four high priority investments which will increase access to improved sanitation for approximately 1.9 million people. The four projects under the Lake Victoria Water Integrated Water Resources Management Programme are co-funded by KfW, the German Development Bank and the EU. The sanitation projects will be in Kisumu, Kampala, Mwanza and Kigali.

Mr Speaker, the Commission with support from UNEP through the Adaptation Fund rehabilitated approximately 735 hectares of degraded ecosystems using Ecosystem Based Adaptation (EbA) approaches to restore ecosystem services and functions, for example, water catchment and forest restoration. The Commission supported 56 community-based sub-projects directly benefiting approximately 6,023 persons, which is 49 per cent were female, in the Partner States.

The construction of the Regional Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre commenced in December 2023 in Mwanza, United Republic of Tanzania. The centre will provide reliable search and rescue services on Lake Victoria.

The Commission spearheaded the 12<sup>th</sup> Mara Day celebrations on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023 in Serengeti District, United Republic of Tanzania. The celebrations, which are held annually, highlight a joint commitment to conserve the Mara ecosystem, which holds significant ecological, cultural and economic value for the region.

Mr Speaker, the construction of the second phase of the LVBC Headquarters stands at 50 per cent and is expected to be completed by February 2025.

In the Financial Year 2024/2025, LVBC will focus on:

- i. Enhancing the maritime communication network coverage on Lake Victoria to improve search and rescue services and trade;
- ii. Strengthening the institutional framework for cooperative management in the trans-boundary water and shared ecosystems; and
- iii. Promoting sustainable agriculture and land use management practices in critical trans-boundary watersheds and ecosystems/landscapes.

Mr Speaker, Inter-University Council of East Africa, the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) realised the following achievements in the Financial Year 2023/2024, they are-

- i. Developed seven benchmarks for bachelor's degree in sports and physical education sciences; social work and social administration and in food safety; and one benchmark in One Health. These benchmarks will promote the harmonisation of higher education in EAC;
- ii. Operationalised a regional accreditation framework for academic programmes;
- iii. A total of 63 students from 11 universities in the region were awarded scholarships under the 3<sup>rd</sup> cohort of the KfW-EAC Scholarship Programme (EACSP); and
- iv. An additional 60 female students from different centres of excellence were granted scholarships under the Africa Centres of Excellence Project, funded by the World Bank to undertake postgraduate studies in agricultural related fields.

In the Financial Year 2024/2025 IUCEA will focus on the following priorities-

- i. Implementation of the Common Higher Education Area through the enhancement of the EAC quality assurance, qualifications framework, regional accreditation of programmes, staff and students' mobility in the region;
- ii. Operationalisation of the Higher Education Information Management System (HEIMS) which will facilitate collection of accurate information and data on higher education in the region;
- iii. On-boarding the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Federal Republic of Somalia into IUCEA programmes;
- iv. Rolling-out the new student mobility scheme called East African Community - Student Mobility Scheme in the region; and
- v. Development of a research quality framework for higher education in East Africa to address the existing gaps and challenges in research.

On Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation, Mr Speaker, the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation (LVFO) realised the following key achievements in the FY 2023/2024:

- i) Developed stock assessment protocols as a core element in the Nile Perch Fisheries Management Plan-III (2021-2025). The developed model is able to predict fisheries reference points and appropriate actions to be taken under different scenarios;
- ii) They also developed the e-Fisher App, which is a low-cost electronic data gathering, real-time transmission and analysis system that takes advantage of recent developments in mobile technology. It is able to display financial performance, tracking features such as report generation, trend visualisation, weather data and market intelligence. The e-Fisher app is meant for use by both LVFO and fishing communities;
- iii) They harmonised annual licensing of fisheries, fishing boats and fisher folk and consolidated information on status of fish stocks, catches, fishing capacities including synthesisation, reviews and guidance on licensing procedures; and
- iv) Conducted Training of Trainers in appropriate pond fertilisation and utilisation of on-farm feed using locally available ingredients.

Mr Speaker, in the Financial Year 2024/2025 LVFO will focus on:

- i. Training women and youths who are engaged in small fish processing and traders on the best practice of packaging for enhanced shelf life, quality, marketing and improved human consumption of small fish;
- ii. Conducting a study to identify prime markets for small fish at national, regional and international markets including their requirements to enhance trade and income;
- iii. Developing an ECOPATH module that enables assessment of impacts of volume flows of small fish along the value chain, including the associated aggregated value, employment and estimated risks at each stage of the small fish value chain; and
- iv. Developing policy guidelines and regulatory frameworks for the consolidated national strategies on conservation of aquatic biodiversity and environmental management in Lake Victoria.

Mr Speaker, on East African Kiswahili Commission, following the adoption of Kiswahili as one of the official languages of the Community by the 21<sup>st</sup> Ordinary Summit of the EAC Heads of State in February 2021, the East African Kiswahili Commission (EAKC) has commenced the implementation of the Roadmap for Implementation of Kiswahili as an official language of the Community. The EAKC has engaged with the Partner States in developing national implementation plans. Kiswahili training programmes and manuals for capacity building are under implementation in the Partner States.

The EAKC spearheads the celebrations of the World Kiswahili Language Day on 7<sup>th</sup> July annually in the Partner States. The 2<sup>nd</sup> World Kiswahili Language Day celebrations in the EAC were held in Kampala, Uganda. A regional Kiswahili symposium and youth engagement and mentorship activities preceded the celebrations.

Mr Speaker, in the Financial Year 2024/2025, EAKC will focus on:

- i. Celebrating the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Kiswahili Language Day that will be held in Nairobi, Kenya – I am sorry Mr Speaker. I am coming from the fact that I know where it will be held. It is not Nairobi but Mombasa, Kenya on 7 July, 2024 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Kiswahili International Conference from 5 – 6 July, 2024; and

- ii. They will undertake engagements on the development of EAC Kiswahili Language Policy to guide the use of Kiswahili in the growing multilingual context of the Community.

Mr Speaker, East African Science and Technology Commission, in the Financial Year 2023/2024 the East African Science and Technology Commission (EASTECO) achieved the following:

- i. They launched the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Policy, and the Intellectual Property Policy;
- ii. They disseminated four STI strategies: Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Strategy, Indigenous Knowledge and Technology Systems (IKTS) Strategy, the EAC Regional Innovation and Technology Transfer Strategy and the EASTECO Resource Mobilisation Strategy;
- iii. They published four issues of the East African Journal of Science, Technology and Innovation, and hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> STI Conference. The conference, among other things, called for the establishment of a regional genetic store preserve, genetic materials for future generations; and
- iv. They trained 450 faculty and postgraduate students from universities in Partner States on entrepreneurship development and trained 217 scientists on scientific writing and development of grant proposals for enhanced dissemination of research results and increased resource mobilisation.

Mr Speaker, in the Financial Year 2024/2025, EASTECO's priorities will be to:

- i. Establish Regional STI collaborations and partnerships for networking and resource mobilisation;
- ii. Conduct scientific validation of inventoried indigenous knowledge and technology candidate products for improved healthcare;
- iii. Publish issues of the East African Journal of Science, Technology and Innovation to enhance the dissemination of STI products and services; and
- iv. Develop and maintain a database for indigenous knowledge and technology systems for increased access and utilisation.

On East African Health Research Commission, Mr Speaker, In the Financial Year 2023/2024, the East African Health Research Commission (EAHRC) recorded the following achievements:

- i. They signed an agreement with Busara Centre for Behavioural Economics Incorporated to support the dissemination of research findings from the project on Promoting Universally Accessible HIV Prevention Technologies for African Girls and Young Women;
- ii. Published three issues of the East African Health Research Commission Journal and one issue of the East Africa Science; and
- iii. Convened the 9<sup>th</sup> East African Health and Scientific Conference, Trade Fair and Health Exhibition in Kigali from 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The conference underscored the need for Partner States to adopt digital technologies, including telemedicine, health applications, wearable devices and Artificial Intelligence to improve healthcare delivery and management of diseases.

Mr Speaker, during the Financial Year 2024/2025, EAHRC will focus on the following key priorities:

- i. Publication of the EAHRC journals;
- ii. Resource mobilisation to implement the health programmes of the Digital Regional East African Community Health initiative;
- iii. Develop digital health programmes to train health professionals from Partner States; and



- iv. Build the capacity of the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort of Young East African Research Scientists in mentorship and research ecosystem skills.

On the East African Community Competition Authority, Mr Speaker, competition enforcement is paramount in regulating market structure and conduct by prohibiting anti-competitive practices, which may have devastating effects on the integration agenda. In the Financial Year 2023/2024, the EAC Competition Authority conducted national sensitisation and awareness workshops aimed at promoting and encouraging competition and enhancing consumer welfare in the Community.

In addition, the EACCA conducted capacity building and technical assistance workshops in Partner States, which are yet to enact national competition laws or establish National Competition Authorities, specifically the Republic of Burundi, the Republic of Uganda and the Republic of South Sudan. It is worth noting that the Uganda Competition Law was assented to by the Head of State in February 2024 and the Republic of Burundi established a National Competition Commission in April 2024.

Mr Speaker, the EAC Competition (Amendment) Act, 2022 was assented to by the EAC Heads of State. The Act streamlines the provisions on mergers with the best practice on competition, confers legal personality on the Authority, and empowers the Authority to impose and collect financial penalties.

a) Priority Interventions for the Financial Year 2024/2025 Budget

In the Financial Year 2024/2025, the Authority will focus on the following priorities:

- i. Enforcement of cases notified to the Authority,
- ii. Capacity building for Partner States and relevant stakeholders on competition matters; and
- iii. Developing enforcement toolkits to further strengthen the Authority's regional competition enforcement function.

Mr Speaker, on Audit for the Financial Year 2022/2023, the East African Community Audit Commission issued an unqualified audit opinion to all Organs and institutions of the Community, as well as the projects and programmes implemented for the financial year that ended on 30 June 2023. The statutory audit reports are due for tabling before this Assembly, pursuant to Article 134 of the Treaty. The Community will continue to enhance internal controls and accountability across the Organs and institutions.

Mr Speaker, on EAC Budget for the Financial Year 2024/2025, the Budget estimates for the Financial Year 2024/2025 have been prepared in line with the 6<sup>th</sup> EAC Development Strategy, global and sector-specific priority areas, as adopted by the Council of Ministers, and various Decisions and Directives of the Summit.

Priority Interventions for the Financial Year 2024/2025 Budget

During the Financial Year 2024/2025, the Community will focus on the following global priority areas:

- i. Strengthening regional peace, security, political and governance mechanisms to maintain stability in the Community;
- ii. Enhancing intra-regional trade and investment through an enabling business environment;
- iii. Establishing requisite institutions and accelerating harmonisation of fiscal and monetary policies towards attaining prerequisites for the East African Monetary Union;

- ii. Developing multi-sectoral infrastructure to improve connectivity in the region's transport and ICT to facilitate timely services;
- iii. Enhancing the social and productive sectors to increase productivity and raise the standards of living for East Africans; and
- iv. Enhancing capacities of EAC Organs and Institutions to fulfill their mandates, and raise awareness of the EAC integration processes.

b)Expected outcomes during the Financial Year 2024/2025

Mr Speaker, it is expected that the implementation of the above global priority areas will result into the following outcomes:

- i. Strengthened peace and security, leading to improved inter-state relations and stability in the region;
- ii. Increased intra-regional trade and enhanced access to international export markets;
- iii. Accelerated implementation of the Roadmap of the Attainment of the EAC Monetary Union;
- iv. Improved quality infrastructure and increased level of e-business opportunities, leading to enhanced service delivery and competitiveness;
- v. Increased efficiency in the production and distribution of products and services and improved social welfare of EAC citizens, and
- vi. Effective implementation of EAC projects and programmes, and increased awareness of EAC integration, leading to a greater sense of ownership and inclusiveness of the East African citizenry.

c)Budget Proposal and Allocation to Organs and Institutions for Financial Year 2024/2025

Mr Speaker, the Council submits a budget amounting to \$112,984,442 for the Financial Year 2024/2025. Out of this amount, \$67,785,519, which is 61 per cent, will be equally contributed by Partner States or raised as other internal revenues, while \$43,936,292, /which is approximately 39 per cent, will be sourced from Development Partners.

The Budget is allocated to the EAC Organs and Institutions as follows:

1. EAC Secretariat – \$51,677,120
2. EAC African Court of Justice – \$4,858,553
3. East African Legislative Assembly – \$20,469,040
4. Lake Victoria Basin Commission – \$7,787,519
5. Inter-University Council for East Africa – \$17,287,618
6. Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation – \$3,109,586
7. East African Science and Technology Commission – \$2,177,192
8. East African Kiswahili Commission – \$1,641,445
9. East African Health Research Commission – \$2,451,157
10. East African Competition Authority – \$1,525,212

Mr Speaker, on Budget Assumptions, the budget for the Financial Year 2024/2025 has been developed, taking into consideration the following assumptions:

- i. Political stability, peace, security and good governance in the region;
- ii. A conducive macro-economic and business environment in the region;
- iii. Continued resilience of the Partner States' economies, in view of global shocks; and

- iv. Timely disbursement of financial resources by Partner States and Development Partners, in line with the EAC Financial Rules And Regulations, and signed financial agreements to facilitate the implementation of the projects and programmes.

Mr Speaker, on acknowledgements, please join me in recognising and appreciating the continued cooperation and support from both Partner States and the following key Development Partners.

- i. The Federal Republic of Germany;
- ii. Japan;
- iii. The Kingdom of Sweden;
- iv. The People's Republic of China;
- v. The Swiss Confederation;
- vi. United States of America;
- vii. African Development Bank;
- viii. The African Union;
- ix. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation;
- x. Busara Centre for Behavioural Economics Incorporated;
- xi. European Union;
- xii. International Fund for Agricultural Development;
- xiii. International Organisation for Migration;
- xiv. St Andrew's University;
- xv. The University of Heidelberg;
- xvi. Trademark Africa;
- xvii. United Nations Environment Programme;
- xviii. The World Bank Group. (*Applause*)

The EAC looks forward to strengthening and expanding cooperation and collaboration with all Development Partners.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion, the Budget for the Financial Year 2024/2025 embodies a strategic approach aimed at fostering sustainable economic transformation through physical consolidation and targeted investments in climate change mitigation and adaptation. By prioritising interventions that promote both economic transformation and environmental resilience, we are not only safeguarding but laying a foundation for improved livelihoods across East Africa.

Resources have been allocated with this objective in mind and I, therefore, urge all Heads of EAC organs and institutions to ensure that these resources are utilised to achieve the desired objective.

I call upon all East Africans to continue to tap into the opportunities presented with a bigger and expanded East African market. Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move. (*Applause*)

**The Speaker:** It was not easy; 75 pages. Thank you, Honourable Ministers. Thank you for your good speech. Now, we have to refer this speech to the General Purpose Committee for consideration. I invite Members to take time to read it and get ready for tomorrow because we have to debate this speech.

With this, Honourable Members, let us adjourn this meeting until tomorrow, 26 June 2024 at 2.30 p.m.

*(The House rose at 5.27 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 26 June 2024 at 2.30 p.m.)*