



## EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

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### EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)

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

**Friday, 28 June, 2024**

*The East African Legislative Assembly met at 9.55a.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 members, good morning. We have the Minister in charge of East African Affairs from DRC in our offices and he is willing to take oath today. We have been in consultation with the CTC, the SG, the Clerks and we agreed that he could take oath when we have finished with the last item. This is the communication I have.

I have been informed that the Committee in charge of Regional Affairs and Conflict Resolution has requested for more time so that they can deal with – Are you ready? Okay, we can proceed.

### LAYING OF PAPER

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND CONFLICT  
 RESOLUTION ON THE OVERSIGHT ACTIVITY TO ASSESS THE PROCESS,  
 REGULATIONS AND CHALLENGES OF CONDUCTING NATIONAL GENERAL  
 ELECTIONS IN KIGALI, RWANDA**

**The Speaker:** Chairperson, Committee on Regional Affairs, lay your report.

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9.59

**Dr Siranda Gerald Blacks (The Chairperson, Committee on Regional Affairs and conflict Resolution, Uganda):** Thank you, Rt Hon. Speaker. On the onset, I want to request two amendments on the Order Paper. The right report to be laid should include the oversight assessment on Kampala, in the Republic of Uganda. What is on the Order Paper is only talking about Kigali, Rwanda but the report will also include the oversight that was conducted in Kampala, Uganda.

Rt Hon. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the report of the Committee on Regional Affairs and Conflict Resolution on the oversight activity to assess the processes, regulation and challenges of conducting national general elections. This report was conducted from 15<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 in the Republic of Uganda and the Republic of Rwanda. I beg to lay.

*(Dr Siranda Gerald Blacks laid the document on the Table)*

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, TOURISM AND NATURAL RESOURCES ON THE ONSPOT ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECTS AND PLANS BY LAKE VICTORIA BASIN COMMISSION AND LAKE VICTORIA FISHERIES ORGANISATION

**The Speaker:** Chairperson for the Committee, present your report.

10.01

**Ms Francoise Uwumukiza (The Chairperson, Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources, Rwanda):** Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the report of the Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources on the on-spot assessment of the implementation of projects by the Lake Victoria Basin Commission and the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation be adopted.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

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

**Ms Uwumukiza:** Mr Speaker, yes, I do.

*(Seconded by Hon. Fatuma Ndagiza, Hon. David Sankok, Hon. Harabemungu Mathias, Hon. Manirambona Anastase)*

**Ms Francoise Uwumukiza (Rwanda):** Mr Speaker, this is a report on the on-spot assessment of the implementation of projects by the Lake Victoria Basin Commission and the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation, an activity conducted from 19<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> February 2024 by the Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources.

Page two, table of contents. Page three, list of acronyms. Page four, list of acronyms continued. Page five, introduction.

Pursuant to Rule 81 and Annex 5 (D) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, some of the functions of the Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources (ATNR) are to assess and evaluate activities of the Community, carryout relevant research and evaluate action programmes in its respective mandate.

The broad function of the Committee on ATNR hinge on Chapters 18, 19 and 20 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community (EAC). Chapter 19 provides for cooperation in environment and natural resources management. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and provisions of the Treaty, the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) and the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO) fall under the mandate of the Committee on ATNR.

The Committee on ATNR, therefore, conducted an on spot assessment activity to assess the implementation of the ongoing projects by the LVBC and LVFO and the contribution of the two institutions to food security and climate change resilience.

## 2. Objectives of the on-spot assessment

The objective of the activity was to assess the implementation of projects by the LVBC and LVFO and the contribution for the two institutions to food security and climate change resilience.

## 3. Methodology

In undertaking this activity, the committee:

- i. Received presentations from the management of the LVBC and LVFO;
- ii. Conducted interactive meetings with the management of the LVBC and LVFO;
- iii. Visited the construction site of the LVBC headquarters;
- iv. Visited the project undertaken by LVBC; and
- v. Visited the National Fisheries Resources Research Institute of Uganda (NaFIRRI).

## 4.0 The Lake Victoria Basin Commission

The Lake Victoria Basin Commission is a specialised institution of the EAC located in Kisumu, Republic of Kenya within the LVBC. The establishment of LVBC is provided for under Article 114(2)(b) (vi) of the Treaty.

The operations of the Commission are governed by the Protocol for Sustainable Development of Lake Victoria Basin (2003) and the Lake Victoria Basin Commission Act, 2022.

Lake Victoria is Africa's largest lake with 68,870 km<sup>2</sup> surface area while its catchment area (basin) covers 180,950 km<sup>2</sup>. It is the second largest fresh water body in the world.

The EAC designated LVB as an area of high economic interest and regional economic growth zone to be developed jointly by the EAC Partner States. The LVBC is mandated to coordinate sustainable development and management of the LVB in the five Partner States that cover the basin.

## 4.1 Projects under the LVBC

The operations of LVBC are based on projects it undertakes in collaboration with other stakeholders although the mandate of LVBC is within the LVB which cover five Partner States;

some of the projects were designed to include all the EAC Partner States. The table below is a summary of projects undertaken by LVBC.

For the interest of those attending online, we have the table summary of projects under the LVBC, we have the project name, “LVB Integrated Water Resource Management”. We have the Multi-national Lake Victoria Marine Time Communication and Transport, we have Adapting climate change, ScaleWAYS, Nile Cooperation for Climate Resilience and we have focus, estimated cost, development partners and coverage of these projects. The source is, presentation by LVBC before the Committee on AGNR.

#### 4.1.1 Lake Victoria Basin Integrated Water Resources Management Project

The overall objective of the Lake Victoria Basin-Integrated Water Resources (LVB-IWRM) project is to improve water quality and availability through strategic and sustainable management of the LVB via regional IWRM measures. The specific objectives include: To strengthen long term strategic and regional water resource management function of the LVBC Secretariat and reduce untreated effluents into the Lake Victoria through targeted infrastructure investment in liquid and solid waste-water management.

Under this project, the following projects to reduce untreated effluents into the Lake Victoria are undertaken:

- i. Mwanza Sewer Network Upgrade Project (Mwanza High Priority Investment HPI)
- ii. Kisumu Informal Settlement Sanitation Project (Kisumu HPI)
- iii. Sanitation Infrastructure in the South-East of Luzira Catchment Area (Kampala HPI); and
- iv. Kigali Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant Project (Kigali HPI).

Challenges encountered during the implementation of the project

- i. Delay in the implementation of the HPI in the Partner States mainly due to prolonged processes of signing of Project and Funding Agreements;
- ii. Exclusion of the Republic of Burundi in the second component of the Programme for implementation of HPIs;
- iii. Sustainability of the Programme results and maintaining existing cooperation ties with Development Partners requires a strong Water Resources Unit at LVBC.

Remedies

- i. Lessons learnt in the conclusion of the first two Project and Funding Agreements (Kigali and Mwanza) being applied for the case of Uganda;
- ii. Continuous dialogue with KfW and exploring diplomatic channels to engage the German Government (BMZ)- this is an abbreviation in Dutch - with a view to implement a Nature-based Solution Project seems promising; and
- iii. Reviewing and strengthening the LVBC’s delivery units.

#### 4.1.2 The Multinational Lake Victoria Maritime Communication and Transport Project

The Multinational Lake Victoria Maritime Communication and Transport Project (MLVCT) aims at improving maritime transport, security and safety of navigation on Lake Victoria for improved lake transport (people, goods and services), trade and tourism which are key ingredients of integration. Specifically, it will:

- i. Improve maritime communication network coverage and functionality;
- ii. Operationalise the regional MRCC and 2 sub-centres in Kampala and Kisumu;
- iii. Improve safety and security of shipping and prevention of marine pollution by ships in Lake Victoria;
- iv. Establish, equip and strengthen the emergency Search and Rescue (SAR) Centres;
- v. Strengthen weather forecast services around and on the lake and other value-added services;
- vi. Develop the East African Maritime Transport Strategy and Lake Victoria Development programme;
- vii. Strengthen capacity of designated agencies in Partner States;
- viii. Support livelihood efforts of women groups around SARs within BMUs; and
- ix. Facilitate the implementation of Lake Victoria Transport Act, 2007 and its Regulations and Oil Spill Contingency Plan for Lake Victoria.

#### 4.1.3 Construction of LVBC Headquarters

The proposed LVBC headquarters is designed as an ultramodern office complex with two distinct wings. The project is fully funded by the Partner States. The LVBC procured the service of Tareef Enterprises Ltd, who was the contractor to build the headquarters. The Commission received the initial funding of \$ 1.35 million in April 2019. A further \$ 950,000 was received in June 2022 towards the second phase and the final amount of \$ 1.24 million was received in January 2024.

For the first phase, the site was handed over in December 2020, construction commenced in January 2021 until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022. The Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development through the State Department of Public Works, Republic of Kenya appointed officers to offer technical expertise in finalising and fast-tracking approval of designs for the construction and preparation of bill of quantities for the project. The team provides oversight supervision on the project.

#### Challenges encountered during the construction project

The construction project encountered problems when the contractor was building the walls to join the main structure, which was constructed during the first phase. The contractor used uncoursed rubble masonry for walling instead of machine-cut masonry stones. These made the walls weak and shapeless with parts of the building affected as straight joints causing cracks. It was stated that this happened when the first Secretary of Works from the Department of Works who was supervising the project retired and a replacement was delayed.

As consequences to the poor work and other delays, the contract with Tareef Enterprises was terminated. The new tender was published on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023. JV China Jiangxi International was awarded the contract. The site was handed over on 25 July 2023. The second phase is expected to be completed by February 2025.

On their part, the Government of Kenya deployed a dedicated team of seven experts to supervise the project, including the Clerk of works who is stationed at the construction site. The work done up to 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024 was at 35 per cent.

The committee was informed further that the Secretary of Works reported the deliberate poor work done by Tareef Enterprises to the National Construction Authority and the company was

deregistered. Also, the extra cost, which will be incurred to rectify the poor work will be reimbursed by Tareef Enterprises.

The Lake Victoria Basin Commission reported other challenges, which affect the construction project:

- i. Delays occasioned by unforeseen excavation works;
- ii. Weather – rains slowed down the works;
- iii. COVID-19 pandemic;
- iv. Limited initial funding, which in turn downsized the scope of the project;
- v. Cost of inflation likely to affect or alter the cost of the project.

#### 4.1.4 Adapting to Climate Change in Lake Victoria Basin

The Adapting to Climate Change in Lake Victoria Basin (ACC-LVB) is a regional project implemented by LVBC in five Partner States (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda). The overall objective of the project is to reduce vulnerability to the negative effects of climate change by building climate resilience. Implementation timeframe was 28<sup>th</sup> June 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023. The Budget was \$5 million.

The project supported concrete adaptation interventions through piloting ecosystem-based Adaptation, Water Conservation and Climate-Smart Agriculture adaptation technologies and practices in selected climate hotspots in the LVB.

Challenges faced during the implementation of the project

- i. Wide geographical scope strained the lean project team with low budgetary allocation for project management functions;
- ii. Unforeseen bureaucratic delays (recruitment of staff of the Project Management Unit, signing of MoUs and procurement processes);
- iii. Emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- iv. Inflation and rising prices of goods and services; and
- v. Extreme weather events.

Lessons learnt from the project

- i. It is fundamentally important to ensure that adaptation interventions are strongly linked to livelihoods of targeted communities;
- ii. There is a strong need for flexibility during selection, design and implementation of adaptation technologies and practices for trans-boundary water catchment resources for instance Lake Victoria Basin;
- iii. The capacity building and learning exchange between peer groups is very powerful in transforming mind-sets, creating passion and promoting innovation, especially at the Community level; and
- iv. The long-term sustainability of adaptation initiatives requires a long-term commitment and willingness of people to change behaviour.

Recommendations

- i. Successful implementation of ACC-LVB project interventions has demonstrated the viability of regional, national and community level interventions in enhancing climate change adaptation. It

is, therefore, recommended that an up-scaling programme that replicates piloted adaptation technologies in other LVB climate change hotspots are developed.

- ii. When designing future projects, it is important to ensure the availability of sufficient human and financial resources at regional, national, subnational and community levels in order to ensure effective project implementation in a vast geographical coverage – (*A bird made some noise in the Chamber.*)

**The Speaker:** We have a visitor in the gallery. No, it is disturbing us; they can maybe find a way to get it out. Proceed, Hon Uwumukiza.

**Ms Uwumukiza:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I was on the recommendations.

- ii. When designing future projects, it is important to ensure the availability of sufficient human and financial resources at regional, national, subnational and community levels in order to ensure effective project implementation in a vast geographical coverage such as LVB.
- iii. In future projects, piloting of adaptation technologies and practices should lead to transformative and actionable changes in practice and policy to ensure uptake of appropriate technologies that support long-term resilience building efforts in LVB.

#### 4.1.5 The ScaleWAYS Project

With support from the Austrian Development Agency, ScaleWAYS was funded to the tune of € 1.6 million (0.433 million for LVBC). Initially, this was a three-year research project (2019-2021) but it was extended to November 2022. The project was further extended for a period of four months with additional of € 20,000. The project was jointly implemented by IIASA, LVBC & ICRISAT. The goal is to contribute, through research, to resilience of land and water resources, improved health of ecosystems and human wellbeing in LVB. This was in response to the following threats:

- i. Rapid increase of population and economic growth;
- ii. Degradation of environment and ecosystem; and
- iii. The impact of projected climate change.

#### Key project achievements

- i. The project produced the following comprehensive and informative analytical reports and policy briefs:
  - a. Seasonality of livestock feed increases with climate change;
  - b. Sustainable intensification of rice production;
  - c. Scaling resilient intensified agriculture through agro ecology in East Africa;
  - d. Closing the livestock feed gap in the LVB through regional integration;
  - e. Policy interventions required to support scaling sustainable land and water management in the LVB - high-level recommendations; and
  - f. Concluded capacity strengthening initiatives and produced a corresponding synthesis paper summarising what was supported and what is needed for sustainability.
- ii. Completed an Independent Terminal Evaluation of the ScaleWAYS project as per directive of the Regional Policy Steering Committee. A report will be circulated to staff and Partner States after clearance by LVBC management;
- iii. Conducted project close-out activities, including final project audit and IIASA mission to ensure orderly project closure;

- iv. Prepared a proposal for a follow-on project and submitted to Austrian Development Agency, which is under consideration.

#### Challenges, lessons learnt and recommendations

- i. Research and Development initiatives can be expensive to run and there is need to embed applied research in on-going projects;
- ii. General apathy towards research in the region. There is need to sensitize stakeholders on the importance of research for sustainable development;
- iii. Regional integration processes as well as activities of the Community should leverage on research to ensure that they are data and science-driven and therefore, demand-driven and responsive to the needs of the region.
- iv. There is a need to promote and advocate for adequate funding for research. It plays an important role in development programming, planning, resource mobilization and prioritization.

#### 4.1.6 The Nile Cooperation for Climate Resilience Project

Nile Cooperation for Climate Resilience (NCCR) project is a World Bank supported project of \$ 30 Million grant to Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) as the recipient entity. The development objective of the project is to improve mechanisms for cooperation on water resources management and development in the Nile Basin. The project covers the Nile Basin countries and is implemented by NBI through its three centres namely Nile-SEC, ENTRO and NELSAP-CU, EAC-LVBC and NBD.

The duration of the project is five years with a closing date set to be 30<sup>th</sup> November 2025. The overall objective is to harmonise and strengthen the policies and institutions which govern water quality management in the Nile Equatorial Lakes (NEL) sub-basin countries, to enhance cooperative management of shared resources. The specific objectives are to review and prepare recommendations to harmonise existing water quality management policies in the NEL sub-basin and develop a Regional Water Quality Management Strategy and Action Plan.

The completed activities include:

- i. Regional Inception Workshop held in January 2023;
- ii. Stakeholders analysis and stakeholders engagement plan report was completed in April 2023.
- iii. Situational Assessment was undertaken from July to August 2023. Report validated.
- iv. Draft Harmonized Policy on Water Quality Management submitted to the LVBC on 31st October 2023. The report was validated by a regional workshop from 27th to 28th November 2023.
- v. Draft final water quality policy was presented to the sectoral council in February 2024. One partner state requested for one month period for internal process.
- vi. External audit completed on 31 January 2024.

#### Page 10, 4.2 Resource Mobilization Initiatives

The Lake Victoria Basin Commission has conducted the resource mobilization initiatives by:

- i. hosting of the KfW mission in February 2024 for discussion on the next phase of support to IWRM programme in the LVB.
- ii. holding EAC Germany negotiations and the consultations.
- iii. Having discussions with IFAD to co-design a climate resilience, agricultural and food systems investment program for the LVB.



- iv. In partnership with African Development Bank (AFDB), designed a preparatory funding program on trans-boundary climate resilient agricultural water food, Nexus, \$ 800,000 committed by Korea-Africa Economic Cooperation.
- v. Prepared a Funding Project Proposal on Water Supply and Sanitation Programme for Pro-Poor Urban and Rural Areas in the LVB was designed and submitted to Africa Water Facility of the AfDB. Project has been shortlisted for potential funding. LVBC targets to develop an investment program of over €150 million.
- vi. A joint project on implementing Trans-boundary Mara River Basin Integrated Watershed to be submitted to global environment facility.
- vii. As of now, two project concept notes have been drafted and shared with GGGI:
  - a. Climate resilience through enhanced green growth in LVB; and
  - b. Project preparatory funding for climate resilience ecosystem-based agriculture and fisheries value chain development project
- viii. Designed a PCN on ecosystem resilience and restoration of LVB and fisheries biodiversity conservation project. The PCN is being discussed with UNEP for potential GEF funding.
- ix. Another PCN on climate smart agriculture program to build food and nutrition security resilience in six Partner States was designed and submitted to AfDB climate action window. The proposed project budget is approximately \$15 million.
- x. The Project proposal is under development and targets to cover five LVB countries and is proposed to cover the Republic of South Sudan and the DRC as well. The project cost is estimated to be approximately \$ 90.
- xi. Resulting from COP 28 engagement, a project on climate resilience for sustainable maritime transport infrastructure in LVP has been designed and submitted to AFDB Climate Action Window. Proposed project budget is approximately \$15 million. This might have been 90 million.
- xii. Hosting a World Bank mission on assessment of potential for a Lake Victoria Basin-wide Integrated Programming, March 2024.
- xiii. Regional review workshop on LVBC resource mobilization and the partnership strategy, including its annexes, donor development partnership mapping report and the partnership guidelines, before end of June 2024.
- xiv. Regional review workshop on four key documents required for resource mobilization initiatives, including application for the green climate fund and adaptation fund accreditation before end of June 2024.

The committee noted that the financing of the LVBC project is not sustainable as they rely on development partners. This affects the sustainability of projects when the financing from the development partners cease.

#### 4.3 Challenges to the sustainable development in the Lake Victoria Basin.

- i. Stresses within the lake, overfishing, poor water quality, fluctuating water levels.
- ii. Stresses on littoral zones, construction and farming in shower line, conversion of wetlands.
- iii. Stresses from basin land degradation, deforestation, sediment loads.
- iv. Stresses from outside the basin, nutrients, nitrogen and the phosphorous transported into the basin by air.
- v. Climate change, floods and severe droughts
- vi. Population explosion
- vii. Untreated effluent discharge into the lake
- viii. Oils and the toxic chemical in the form of informal car washes and motor vehicles

ix. Plastics and other solid waste

xi. Water hyacinth infestation.

#### 4.4 The key achievements of LVBC.

The LVBC has achieved the following;

- i. Enactment of the LVBC Act 2022, which equals to legal identity of the Commission.
- ii. The MV Jumuiya, which was docked for a decade, is ready to start operations after being repaired.
- iii. Harmonised 10 policies/laws/standards and regulations to strengthen the regional enabling environment.
- iv. Build consensus and prepare the over 22 instruments for collaborative management of environment and natural resources in the LVB
- v. Community livelihood improvement, empowering communities through alternative nature-based livelihood options.
- vi. Private sector adoption and investments in resource efficiency and cleaner production and green growth agriculture development over \$32 million worth.
- vii. Basin-wide analytical work and specific studies for informed programming of Lake Victoria Basin and decision support over 30 key studies.
- viii. Improving safety of navigation of Lake Victoria - unlocking it for Lake transport, trade and tourism.
- ix. Improved water supply and sanitation for over one million people in the targeted 15 secondary towns in the basin.
- x. Undertaken part pollution control investments in key municipal waste water pollution hotspots (Kisumu, Homabay, Bomet, Mwanza, Bukoba, Kampala, Jinja, Gitega).

#### 4.5 Emerging issues

During the interactive meeting with the management of LVBC, the following issues were identified;

- i. The Lake Victoria Basin Commission projects and services are not visible to many stakeholders.
- ii. The Lake Victoria Transport Act, 2007 is not fully implemented by the key stakeholders.
  - a. Partner States prefer their national laws to this Act.
  - b. some required regulations are yet to be made.
  - iii. Understaffing challenges facing the LVBC;
  - iv. The LVBC is working to improve safety of navigation and security in the lake by:
    - a. enactment of the Lake Victoria Transport Act 2007.
    - b. production of navigation charts.
    - c. Implementation of the oil spill and toxic chemicals contingency plan for Lake Victoria.
    - d. installation of navigation aids on 37 sites on main and local routes on Lake Victoria - Kenya 10, Tanzania 15 and Uganda 12.
- v. Tackling the water hyacinth menace. LVPC has previously controlled the water hyacinth through the mechanical removal of biological means but the science of water hyacinths needs more research to come up with proper solutions to address the problem.
- vi. Sanitation improvement. LVBC has made greater steps in improving sanitation in the region. The following progress has been made so far.
  - a. 12 sludge treatment plants, (267m<sup>3</sup> per day) constructed
  - b. 75 of the over 190 targeted public toilets to be constructed
  - c. 12 solid waste management systems constructed
  - d. distribution of 29 tractors and trailers, 331 skips, 8 vacutugs, and 16 exhausters.
  - e. Interventions on solid waste management.

- f. 3,000 peers and facilitators were trained (about 50% were women).
  - vii. Water quality improvement. The committee was informed that there is no readily available specific data on the water quality for Lake Victoria. Most projects implemented with the aim of improving the water quality are commonly considered “non-regret” measures. The project under the LVBIWRM programme aim to reduce untreated affluent running into the LVB, hence contributing to improvement of water quality. The water quality performance indicator used for these projects is the reduction of biological oxygen demand.

4.6 A visit to the Kisumu Water and Sanitation Company Ltd, (KIWASCO), which was founded in 2001 to provide adequate clean potable water and to collect, treat, and dispose sewage and wastewater within the jurisdiction of Kisumu City. In 2019, the company expanded its mandate to incorporate sanitation and this translated to the change of name from sewage to sanitation. KIWASCO owns two sewerage treatment facilities, Kisat Conventional sewage plant with a capacity of 8,000 cubic meters per day, and Nyalenda oxidation pond with a capacity of 18,000 per day. The committee visited the Kisat Conventional Sewage Plant, which was supported by the LVBC in the construction of some of the sanitation plants.

The committee visited the wastewater treatment plant and we had a discussion with the management of the plant. The committee was informed that although the plant has the capacity of 8,000 cubic meters per day, the project is operating below its capacity because many people around Kisumu are not connected to the system. It is estimated that only 18% of the city's residents are connected to the central sewerage system. Other customers use alternative options such as pit latrines and septic tanks. Therefore, more efforts should be put to ensure the full utilization of the capacity.

On the other hand, it was reported that the facility does not have the capacity to remove phosphorous and nitrogen or their compounds. These elements and their compounds are the principal culprits in water pollution because they cause eutrophication, which causes algae growth and anoxia. These are scientific terminologies.

The committee was informed that many people around Lake Victoria do not have access to sanitation services. It is estimated that if the current level of pollution continues, it will reach a time when the lake will be completely polluted. The committee concluded its tour by planting trees at the wastewater treatment plant.

4.7 A courtesy call to Kisumu County Government. The committee was received by the county Deputy Governor, His Excellency Dr. Mathew Ochieng Owili, who represented the county governor, His Excellency Professor Peter Anyang' Nyong'o. In that meeting, the committee interacted with the county executive committee members. In the meeting, the county informed the committee on the following development programs;

- i. The county is developing Kisumu to be a tourist destination and investment center by promoting various attractions and to build a new big conference center in Kisumu.
- ii. The county is developing fishing landing sites with cooling facilities for storage of fish
- iii. The county is developing fish caging and fish ponds to promote food security in the county and beyond
- iv. The county enacted several laws including the Kisumu Climate Change Act 2022, which enabled the formation of climate committees up to village levels
- v. The county is working to move from water catchment to water tape in order to provide safe drinking water

- vi. Kisumu is an entry to EAC. Therefore, there is a need to revamp the use of Kisumu port and other ports along the Lake Victoria
  - vii. Kisumu County is organizing the Blue Economy Conference, in which they are going to invite the committee on ATNR to participate; and
  - viii. Kisumu Airport has been expanded to the status of an international airport.  
The committee and the county Government of Kisumu agreed to work together to promote the integration agenda of the EAC.
- 4.8 Observations of the committee on LVBC. The committee made the following observations concerning the LVBC.
- i. The Lake Victoria Basin Commission has put commendable effort into mobilizing resources and managed to attract development partners to finance projects undertaken by the Commission
  - ii. Over-dependence on development partners to finance projects does not ensure the sustainability of the project
  - iii. The LVBC should be creative to initiate projects and programs for income generation to reduce the over-dependence on development partners.
  - iv. The problem... (*Interruption*)

**Mr Sankok:** Point of procedure, Mr Speaker.

Honourable Speaker, was there no way of summarizing, because some of us have read through, so that it will take a short time to enable go to other things. And I request the Clerk of this committee to be summarizing so that we don't take all reports page by page.

**The Speaker:** We have even agreed that these kinds of reports would take 15 minutes maximum. So, you can go to the end of the conclusion.

**Ms Uwumukiza:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Maybe I can just inform the House that this is a summary of the report we had because we visited many places; next time we will be reporting in the phases. Because the Assembly is also tasked to inform the audience that the following is online. If we just skip the observation of the committee, we go to the conclusion without recommendations of the committee on the organization, we are not informing the citizens that are following this Assembly but I will go by your guidance.

Mr Speaker, that is the challenge because we tried to squeeze our report because we visited a lot and we have found a lot and we tried to make this summary. I don't know even if it will be easy to conclude because I was on LVBC before I reached LBVFO. Maybe I will end up with LVBC today and it will give me time to proceed the next time with the LVBF as another institution we visited. Let me end up with LVBC today and we continue with the LBVFO next time.

**The Speaker:** Okay.

**Ms Uwumukiza:** Next time I will. Okay, thank you very much. So, I was presenting to this August House, the observation of the committee on LVBC.

vi. The construction of LVBC headquarters has been delayed due to problems caused by the previous contractor, which led to the termination of the contract and the procurement of a new contractor.

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- vii. The change of the contractor and the rectification of the poor work done by the previous contractor will increase the cost of construction.
  - viii. The weaknesses on the part of the Commission, the contractor and the consultants contributed to the poor workmanship of the building.
  - ix. Unregulated human activities within the LVB is one of the main causes of many problems facing the lake.
  - x. The LVBC does not have a water quality expert; and
  - xi. There is a general apathy towards research in the EAC.
- Recommendation by the Committee on LVBC.  
The committee recommends to the Assembly to;
- i. Appreciate the LVBC for securing financial support from development partners to finance various projects of the Commission.
  - ii. Urge the Council of Ministers to allocate more financial resources to the LVBC to enable it to implement critical projects.
  - iii. Urge the Council of Ministers to direct the Partner States to absorb the projects, which development partners stopped financing.
  - iv. Urge the Council of Ministers to closely monitor the construction of the LVBC headquarters and the other construction projects in the community.
  - v. Urge the Council of Ministers to take necessary steps to ensure the contractor who caused problems reimburses the additional cost the LVBC will incur to rectify the problems caused.
  - vi. Urge the Council of Ministers to direct Partner States, EAC Secretariat and institutions of the EAC to sensitise stakeholders on the importance of research for sustainable development.
  - vii. Urge the Council of Ministers to promote tourism and environmental friendly investment opportunities in the cities around Lake Victoria.
  - viii. Urge the Council of Ministers to direct the LVBC and organs and institutions of the EAC to increase visibility of their activities.
  - ix. Urge the Council of Ministers to direct Partner States to put in place harmonized mechanisms to regulate human activities in the LVBC.
  - x. Urge the Council of Ministers to direct the Government of Kenya to improve the capacity of the Kisat Conventional Storage Plant to enable it to remove phosphorus and nitrogen and their compounds.
  - xi. Urge the Council of Ministers to make all the required regulations under the Lake Victoria Transport Act 2007 to enable the full implementation of the Act.
  - xii. Ask the Council of Ministers to direct Partner States to implement the Lake Victoria Transport Act 2007.
  - xiii. Urge the Council of Ministers to direct the LVBC to prepare a comprehensive water quality monitoring framework with clear indicators and parameters.
  - xiv. Urge the Council of Ministers to recruit the water quality expert for the LVBC; and
  - xv. Lastly, but not least for the recommendations under LVBC, urge the Council of Ministers to direct Partner States to collaborate with the LVBC in addressing the problem of water hyacinth.

Mr Speaker, the report is not exhausted. I am on project 15.

**Amb. Fatuma Nyirakobwa Ndingiza (Rwanda):** I know we are time barred. However, I propose that we allow her to finish reading her report without going into details. She can focus on observations and recommendations.

**The Speaker:** Yes, go to the observations and recommendations.

**Ms Uwumukiza:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the guidance. The Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization, I will just read the titles.

5.1 The ongoing projects for food security. That is very important for your information and the audience information.

5.2 Projects under development. It is important.

5.3 Contribution of fish to food security and economic development.

5.4 Guidelines and strategies that enhance food security and climate change resilience in the EAC.

5.5 Regionally harmonized the guidelines, protocols and standard operation procedures

5.6 Challenges faced by LVFO

5.7 Recommendations from LVFO

May be I read the challenges associated with global warming; the lake level fishing; IUU; overcapacity in the Lake Victoria fisheries; overfishing, capture of fish and trade disagreement and conflict; fishing technology conflicts; lack of unified official monitoring, control, and surveillance; pollution, including plastic pollution; sand mining affecting fish breeding areas; poor postharvest handling; high prevalence of HIV rates in fishing communities; delay in the disbursement of resources from and development partners; delay in VAT recoveries from the host Partner States and non-recovery from non-host partner states; and emerging issues, climate change, water level pollution of the fish habitat, fish pests, and epidemics.

This is important as well. Recommendations

- i. Fast-track operationalization of expanded scope and mandate
- ii. Change the name from LVFO to EAFO. This is from the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization to the East African Fisheries Organization to cover all the water bodies;
- iii. Increase partner state budget support and fill the staff gaps in the fish quality directories and prioritize all fish quality activities
- iv. Strengthen collaborations and partnerships to attract more resources to the organization.
- v. Work together to mitigate climate change, particularly global warming.
- vi. Work towards an effective community management regime.
- vii. Support the organization in erecting another structure to accommodate projects and two additional directorates, (aquaculture and fish quality assurance)
- viii. The East African community should put in place mechanisms that will enable organs and institutions of the EAC to recover VAT from Partner States that do not host the particular organ or institutions.
- ix. Urge Partner States to remit statutory contribution earned in the financial year for proper planning and execution of the budget.
- x. Legislate a law through EALA for the harmonized regional fisheries enforcement; and
- xi. Promote clean-up projects in fishing communities.

So, we also visited the National Fisheries Resources Research Institute. I skip the narrative of other visits to the 5.9 observations of the committee for the LVFO.

The committee's observations with regard to the LVFO;

- i. The Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation needs to expand its offices by constructing an extension building to accommodate the increased number of staff and other needs as the mandate of the institution is being expanded.

- ii. Although the mandate of the LVFO was expanded to include all water bodies in the EAC, the continued use of the name Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization poses a challenge and makes it perceived as the only responsible for the Lake Victoria
- iii. There is delay in transforming the LVFO to enable it undertake the mandate to operate in all water bodies of the EAC.
- iv. There is a need for a Community law to regulate fishing activities in the EAC. The same law should operationalise the expanded mandate of LVFO;
- v. There is a need if we were to continue being a regional fisheries management organization recognized by FAO.
- vi. The delayed reimbursement of VAT from the hosting government and lack of mechanism for VAT refund for activities of organs and institutions of the EAC undertaken outside their headquarters is still a challenge.
- vii. And the East African community produces only 1.7 million tonnes of fish, contrary to estimated need of 4.5 million tonnes per year.

#### Recommendations of the Committee for the LVFO

The committee recommends to the Assembly to:

- i. Urge the Council of Ministers to direct the LVFO and the relevant Sectoral Council to fast track the process of expanding the mandate of LVFO and the change of its name to enable the institution to operate throughout the region;
- ii. Urge the Council of Ministers to allocate funds for the delayed expansion of the LVFO headquarters in Jinja;
- iii. Urge the Council of Ministers to prepare and present before the Assembly the Bill for a law to operationalise the expanded mandate of the LVFO;
- iv. Urge the Council of Ministers to direct all Partner States to reimburse the VAT they collected from all Organs and Institutions of the Community;
- v. Urge the Council of Ministers to prepare a regulation to enable Organs and institutions of the EAC to claim refund of VAT and other taxes when they undertake activities outside their hosting Partner States;
- vi. Urge the Council of Ministers to direct Partner States to invest more in fish farming to enable the EAC meet its expected demand of 4.5 million tonnes of fish per year; and
- vii. Urge the Council of Ministers to direct the LVFO and Partner States to continue investing in modern technologies.

#### Conclusion

The on-spot assessment activity to assess the implementation of projects by the LVBC and LVFO, and the contribution of the two institutions to food security and climate change resilience enabled the Committee to exercise its oversight activity on the two institutions. Despite the number of challenges facing the two institutions, generally, LVBC and LVFO are doing a commendable job. It is the responsibility of the Partner States, through the Council of Ministers, to increase their commitment to enable these institutions to utilise all their potential, for the benefit of the Community.

#### Acknowledgements

Allow me to acknowledge. It is very important that the committee acknowledges the facilitation granted to it by the Office of the Speaker and the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly. Also, the

committee appreciates the management and the staff of the LVBC and LVFO for accepting to engage with the committee during this activity.

Their commitment and collaboration enables the committee to accomplish this activity and fulfill its oversight role. Moreover, the committee acknowledges the leadership of Kisumu County, management of KIWASCO and management of NaFFIRI for hosting the committee. The time and valuable information given to the committee is highly appreciated.

Allow me to conclude by thanking the Council of Ministers for their role in enabling these activities and work. Thank you very much. I beg to submit. *(Applause)*

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Honourable Françoise, everyone knows that you are passionate about food security and climate change, and the committee is really working hard.

Hon. Françoise participated in international conferences carrying the EALA and EAC flags high. She was invited to South Africa and Germany as a panelist. We have to recognise this because everywhere you go, you carry the EALA flag. *(Applause)* Thank you.

Honourable members, I now have to propose the motion that the report of the Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources on the On-spot Assessment of the Implementation of Projects by the Lake Victoria Basin Commission and the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation be adopted. Debate is open.

Hon. Dr. Woda, Hon. Kakooza, Hon. Caroline, Hon. Kanini Kega, Hon. Blacks, Hon. Sankok.

**Amb. Fatuma Nyirakobwa Ndongiza (Rwanda):** Procedure

**The Speaker:** Yes –

**Amb. Ndongiza:** Thank you very much. Like you did yesterday for the General Purpose Committee, it would be good if we start with non-committee members and then, we conclude.

**The Speaker:** Yes, we will start with those who are not members of the committee. So, we will have Hon. Kakooza, Hon. Sankok, Hon. Sadia, Hon. Blacks and that is all. Hon. Kanini, I mentioned your name – Kanini Kega. Give me the list, so that we start with Hon. Kakooza, Hon. Siranda, Hon. Sankok, Hon. Sadia and then Hon. Kanini Kega.

11.01

**Mr James Kakooza (Uganda):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for this comprehensive report. I have about two to three observations and therefore, I request the Chairperson Council and our SG to get interested. One is on page 7, 4.1.3 on Construction of Lake Victoria Basin Commission headquarters.

This project has been messed up by the management there and the construction company. According to the information we got two years back in the audit report, it involved the company itself and staff. Why am I saying so? A project of such magnitude and money involves an engineer,



an architect and a constant supervisor on the project. But what is happening here? It seems they did not do their job yet this company was paid.

With such a magnitude of a project, you must give a certificate of compliance during the first phase and you get paid. The second phase; the same. The third phase; the same. But this building reached completion and money was paid but there was no observation of an engineer or supervisor who could detect that the work done on this building was shoddy.

I believe that the company itself colluded with the engineers to produce shoddy work and this is a lot of money - \$1.35 million. When you calculate the variance of the second contractor, it goes to 65 per cent of the total cost of the normal construction of the building. I really suspect that there is something funny either in procurement, with the contractors or the people who were managing this project.

So, I request the Secretary-General and Chairperson of the Council to get interested; we might lose more money because two years back, we visited this site but they are still constructing. The time framework of this construction building ended but they still want more money to be invested in this building. That is the first observation.

Two, I want to talk about issue 11 on the challenges to sustainable development in the Lake Victoria Basin. Mr Speaker, the projects on this lake are quite important that we need to focus on Lake Victoria because most of the people around it in the three Partner States of Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya rely on it for their livelihoods.

If these challenges persist for a long time, we might lose objectivity and the purpose of the lake itself. Once it is congested, we will lose the fish and the freshwater we want to get from that lake, yet it helps our people.

Lastly, resource mobilisation of these projects should be negotiated by the Executive Directors. I also think the Chair Council and the Secretary-General should be part of this process. According to the Audit Report 2022, we found out that sometimes the money is negotiated but not utilised. It attracts an interest and then goes back to the donors. This is a serious issue because once donors give money for such projects, they want it to be used efficiently and have the capacity to absorb the money. But when you return it, it then sends a message that you are not ready for the work you want to do.

With these few remarks, this report is very comprehensive. Chairperson Council and the SG, I think this is very good information to base on for us to achieve what we want. Thank you very much. I beg to submit.

**The Speaker:** Thank you Hon. Kakooza. Now, Hon. Dr Siranda.

11.08

**Dr Siranda Gerald Blacks (Uganda):** Mr Speaker, I want to appreciate you for this opportunity but also to appreciate the very good team, the committee that has done this very good work on areas that I personally have interest in. Being a Samia, fish and living around the water is my life.

I am a product of people that have lived around the lake. I have gone to school because of the lake and people who live around me know that fish is what we call “sauce” in our area. If you serve food without fish, you have not done a good job.

I want to appreciate the committee but also appreciate that for the first time, we have a full board of Council. *(Applause)* When you take an oath in this House, that is what you ought to do. I want to appreciate all of you for joining our minister from Tanzania who is regularly in this House – *(Applause)*- and minister Kadaga who is also regularly in the House.

Hon. Peninah has also done well; she is always in the House, as well as the Chairperson of Council who has sat here since we came. I want to appreciate you. People talked about a female SG but it is important that we also have a youthful person because almost 80 per cent of this Community are very youthful people.

Mr Speaker, I want to appreciate the committee under the able chairpersonship of my boss, Hon. Francoise Uwumukiza. First, I would like to recommend that it is timely that we look at all our lakes around, for instance, Lake Tanganyika, which covers Tanzania, DRC and of course, Burundi. It is very important that as a region, we take keen interest in all our water bodies and lakes within the region, so that the amendment captures the people that benefit and are around Lake Tanganyika, which is also the biggest freshwater lake within the region.

It is not only that; it includes amending the name, “Lake Victoria Basin”, but also the fisheries commission, so that it captures all our water bodies. We must also look, with keen interest, what water body we have in Somalia now. Which one do we have that covers DRC the other side? We must pay attention to all these.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, the report should have also mentioned the encroachment on the lakes. If you go to the country where I come from, I do not think, if we go by the trend we are taking – Hon. Kakooza knows what I am talking about - we shall have any lake reserved. We have people who are encroaching on and building inside the lake. This is not only in Uganda but across our region, Lake Victoria has been encroached upon by people who are setting up beaches. They are now building permanent structures, ferrying all kinds of murrum to fill up the lake.

If we do not defend and protect this, our generation and our grandchildren that will come after will not have anything called a lake. In other countries, lakes like the ones we have - Lake Victoria - do not have ownership. They remain empty spaces, so that everybody who does not even have resources will have an opportunity to benefit. So, the report should have also pointed out that on people who are doing construction using concrete and cement, this has a direct implication on what we are going to see.

Mr Speaker, when you look at page 10 on the area of research, it is a very important aspect, but once people do not get the real benefit of what is coming out of it, then people start thinking they are only being used, in terms of getting what they want but we do not tend to give feedback from the research. That is why the categories of people whom we conduct this research from are becoming tired because they do not see the importance. We look at them when we want to do research. After the research, we do not even give feedback and yet this is a very important aspect.

Mr Speaker, when you go to page 10, specifically on the area of climate and flooding, everywhere within this region is an area of disaster because there are cities that are called “cities over the sun”, but they are now “cities under the lake”. I think it is important that we give concrete suggestions to deal with matters of flooding and landslides that are affecting our people who keep running from these areas.

The other thing I have not seen is the interaction of these institutions with the people because we must involve them. I have seen where the army or security agencies are killing people on the lakes. They have chased people from the lakes but these are the lakes where our great-grandfathers existed, worked within and earned a living. If we are putting measures to protect, then we must give a solution in terms of involving them and giving a plan. When they leave the activities within the lakes, where do they go?

Mr Speaker, as a person who comes from these areas of the lake, I am speaking for people who earn a living from and whose lives depend on activities around the lake. What plan do we have for them? What involvement do we have for them so that at the end of the day, these organisations do not only engage with the donors but also engage with the people who benefit from the lakes? We want to get a sense of ownership from the communities of East Africans who have lived all their lives around this lake.

Having said that, I believe that the committee should be more involved and engaging so that it is aware to also do oversight on the money that is raised by the donors. I believe that during appropriation, the SG and the Council should take interest. I agree with Hon. Kakooza that once the entity is under the EAC, you should pay keen interest, in terms of which donors they are engaging and what the terms of engagement are, so that this money is as well appropriated at the end of the day, so that we do oversight for proper accountability.

I beg to submit by seconding this report, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Hon. Dr Siranda. I will now give the Floor to Hon. Sankok.

11.16

**Mr David Ole Sankok (Kenya):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. From the onset, let me say this is the best report I have heard so far. Congratulations to the committee for coming up with such an elaborate, detailed and very good report. Lake Victoria Basin Commission and Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation are extremely important in our economic bloc. If that goes, it can be an economic game-changer because of the blue economy.

Mr Speaker, recommendation 5.10 (i) is very important and we want further recommendation that instead of only changing their name, they should also expand their mandate to include the blue economy such as tourism, irrigation and transport, so that we can tap into the leaks that we have in East Africa.

In the East African economic bloc, we are very blessed with very many freshwater lakes. In fact, Lake Victoria is the second largest freshwater lake in the world. We have Lake Victoria, Lake

Kivu, Lake Edward, Lake Tanganyika, Lake Albert, Lake Baringo, Lake Malawi which is Nyasa, Lake Kyoga, Lake Turkana, Lake Nakuru and Lake Magadi. We have many; more than 38 lakes.

On top of that, we have 6,500 kilometres of coastline. In addition, we have massive rivers with massive waters; for example, the Congo River. The Nile also starts from East Africa. Tana River, River Sondu and other rivers are across East Africa. If we expand the mandate of these two institutions, they will be an economic game changer in our economic bloc.

If we talk about transport, Lake Tanganyika can be a source of transport. Water transport is always the cheapest and safest, compared to rail. In Lake Tanganyika, we can easily move goods, services and people from the United Republic of Tanzania to Malawi, DRC, Rwanda and Zambia. You can imagine that one water body. It is the same with Lake Victoria.

We are even blessed as an economic bloc. We even have highlands like Zanzibar. If we tap into this resource, we will economically change the lives of our 350 million citizens. Unfortunately, the communities living around Lake Victoria are the poorest. We went there; I saw for myself. I have been there several times, even before I became a Member of Parliament. So, I do not know whether if we expand their mandate to include other lakes, it would be exporting poverty to other regions that are currently living better lives than what we witnessed around Lake Victoria.

Mr Speaker, imagine some of the fish that is being sold on the shores of Lake Victoria is from China. The fish from China is cheaper than the fish a stone's throw away from Lake Victoria. You can imagine that fish from China have travelled 10,000 kilometres. These ones have travelled several metres and they are more expensive than the ones that have travelled 10,000 kilometres. We have to ask ourselves pertinent questions.

These organisations that we have been giving money to and that our taxpayers have been paying money to do research and make sure that they change the livelihood of those people around Lake Victoria. If the fish from Lake Victoria is more expensive than that from China, we expect people around Lake Victoria to be the richest but it is the opposite. So, as we expand their mandate and we include other lakes, rivers and oceans, let us be careful so that we do not export poverty to those other regions.

Mr Speaker, let us also take keen interest in how much we have been able to inject into Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation and Lake Victoria Basin Commission, so that we see if we are really getting value for money. Just at the headquarters of Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation, 100 metres from the headquarters, there is a fishing community there and they are the poorest. So, what impact will they have?

I rest my case, supporting this particularly very good report but also urging the Council of Ministers and thank them that our Secretary-General is so dedicated; she is here. *(Applause)* The bench of our Council of Ministers is almost full. Thank you very much; we do not take it for granted. We know you are very busy because you oversight other institutions back at home but we want us to all focus and have an economic lens towards these two institutions.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I support this. *(Applause)*

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Hon. Sankok. Let us now have Hon. Kanini Kega and then Hon. Sadia.

11.22

**Ms James Sadia Sebit (South Sudan):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I rise to give credit to the committee for the comprehensive report. I rise to make a contribution. I am very interested in the recommendations of the committee. The recommendations have to be taken very seriously by the Council. Why am I saying so?

In South Sudan, we have River Nile and for us to play in this integration game, it is only by exporting our fish but up to now, our traders are facing problems. They are allowed to go through Uganda but when they get to the border of DRC, they normally stop them. They say, “Your fish does not meet the standards.”

I wonder why. How come it can pass through the borders of Uganda but when it reaches the border of Congo, that is when the fish is impounded? Our traders have problems; they have lost almost half a million dollars. Since last month, the fish has been there between the border of Congo and Uganda.

Since the Council chairperson is present, this recommendation has to be taken up because our fish traders need capacity building. As the Accounts Committee, we visited the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation and found that what they are doing is good. For a country like South Sudan, if we have traders who would really contribute- when you look at the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the contribution of the fish is 2.3 per cent. Imagine if we have the River Nile contributing, how much would that be to the East African economy? I really urge that the mandate be expanded and the Council takes very keen interest so that, at least, it could address—(*Interjection*)

**The Speaker:** Information -

**Mr Kakooza:** Mr Speaker, the issue of standards is not only in fish but in all products that are being produced by manufacturers within the partner states. Tiles, which are supposed to be sold in other partner states get a hard time crossing the border because of the lack of standards. There is a big need for a legal framework that should have a centre of excellence of one national standard within the Partner States that body certifies once a product, and then the people will be easily transport their goods within the Partner States.

Chairperson of the Council, we need to look into that Bill because each Partner State has its own standards but these are manufacturing companies that are within the Partner States. Why don't we have one body that certifies each product so that the legal framework and the body are known? Instead of taking fish to Congo, you are stopped, you take tiles to South Sudan, they stop them; you take them to Burundi, they are stopped too. I think a legal framework is seriously needed.

**The Speaker:** Hon. Kakooza, it was not information; you were really debating. Hon Sadia -

**Dr Woda:** Mr Speaker, further information on the fish that is being confiscated in South Sudan is that it is an issue of Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) because it is known all over that the fish from

South Sudan are being exported up to Europe through Congo. Therefore, it is an NTB and I think it needs another debate and recommendation from the Council of Ministers.

As Hon. Sadia said, there was a budget allocated to South Sudan for sensitization when they joined the EAC but one of the problems with that budget is that when they went for the implementation of that sensitization, on the certificate of origin- the sensitization was only done for not more than two days. I think when the council is here, there is a need for more sensitization and removing NTBs that are on the borders. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

**Ms Sadia Sebit:** Mr Speaker, let me conclude by saying that the activities of Lake Victoria Basin Organisation also have to be- because for South Sudan, our river is vulnerable to flooding and droughts; we lack robust infrastructure for water supply and sanitation. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Hon. Sadia. Hon. Kega, try to be brief.

11.29

**Mr James Kanini Kega (Kenya):** Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity to contribute to this very important motion, which was passionately moved by the Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture, Hon. Francoise Uwumukiza.

I take this opportunity to congratulate our newest Secretary-General, H.E Veronica Nduva for joining the Community and coming in at a very critical time. We have quite a number of SGs but right now, we have the actual SGs, Hon. Siranda and I have been bragging about ourselves as actual SGs.

Mr Speaker, as Members of Parliament, we have three critical cardinal roles that is; to legislate, do oversight, and to represent. Today or tomorrow, we will be making the budget for the EAC and we will appropriate funds to institutions and organs. It is very important to follow up on how the funds are being used. If you look at the report that is very comprehensive that the committee has given us, it points to some misuse of resources. It is not just now; it has been happening. It is very critical that as the SG takes her position, knowing very well that it is not just in one entity but in many entities.

I sit in the General Purpose Committee and some organisations are notorious that whenever we call them to come and explain to us how they are implementing the funds that we have appropriated to them and how they have used the funds, some do not appear. I think there is no recourse so to speak because year in, year out, you have the same institutions having the same challenges.

It should not be business as usual for institutions that have received funds from the Community and donors- sometimes these funds are not even appropriated because some institutions are operating as if they are very independent that nobody is following up on their funding and others get funds from donors and do not even report. I think it is a new chapter that we are opening to make sure that funds of the Community are properly utilized.

This can only be done if the committees of this House are facilitated to make sure that with this on-spot inspection and assessment, we will be able to bring forward some of these challenges. As we also move forward as a House, we should come up with an implementation committee because once we have this report, we have it adopted and after adoption, we look for the next year to have another report but we also need to have an implementation committee that will be able to go through all the reports that we have adopted in this House to make sure that the recommendations we put up have been implemented.

With those few remarks, I commend this committee for the good work they have done. I also thank the Front Bench.

Mr Speaker, you can see that Members here are excited to see the Front Bench; we always miss you. When you are not around, we are not very happy and you have seen that it is very gender sensitive. In fact, I am worried because the men are now fewer compared to the ladies. I beg to support.

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Honourable members, we have five Members who want to contribute but we have this - our ministers are leaving us; they are about to leave us with the SG when the minister of the Democratic Republic of Congo is ready to take the Oath. I propose that we interrupt this debate and allow him to take the Oath and then we will resume our debate but if you think the debate is enough, we can put the question right now and then - let me give the Floor to- this is the will of the House. If you want to still contribute, we will come back and continue. If I can put the question, we can stop here. I put the question? -

Thank you, honourable members, for this debate. I will give the Floor to the ministers to contribute because even today is a good day for us. The whole Front Bench is full. (*Applause*) If there is any, I can proceed. Do you want to - you may have the Floor.

11.35

**Ms Veronica Mueni Nduva (The Secretary-General, East African Community):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am not a minister but allow me to just have the Floor as the Secretary-General to welcome our ministers. Thank you very much for heeding. I tried to mobilise the ministers because the two days I have been sitting here, I have really seen the benefit of these proceedings. (*Applause*)

Moving forward, the ministers have really been pledging to support and to be part of this process. We will be working very closely with the clerk so that we know the business of the day so that even as we in-build our programs and calendar, we can ensure that we communicate to the ministers the prudent times to be here.

Honourable ministers, I also stand to thank the Assembly because they have been very positive and indeed, one of the things that would be very pleasant to hear is that there is a very determined effort for the budget to be passed on time this financial year in line with our treaty. We are grateful for the support of the Members so far in the General Purpose Committee and the Office of the Speaker.

I wish to submit that but obviously; I know my ministers want to say something before the next program. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Thank you. I now give the Floor to the Chairperson, Committee on Agriculture. Oh, I am sorry. Honourable minister from Kenya, you have the Floor. *(Applause)*

11.38

**Ms Peninah Malonza (The Minister of East African Community, ASALS and Regional Development -Kenya):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mine is to appreciate the opportunity we have been given to be here and, indeed, we have to apologise for having been absent in many meetings that happened in this Assembly.

I was able to look at the social media and I realised that at some point, you had to adjourn the meeting because the Front Bench was not there and, therefore, we want to commit that we will be making maximum appearance in this Assembly as we have taken an oath to be appearing in the sessions of this House. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, I also thank the Members of this Assembly for being very positive and friendly to us since we came and I commend that we have really learned a lot. Personally, in the last few minutes I have been here, I have learned a lot about the Lake Victoria Basin Commission. Thank you. I submit on behalf of my colleagues.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, honourable minister.

Chairperson of the Committee, you may reply.

11.39

**Ms Francoise Uwumukiza (The Chairperson, Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources, Rwanda):** Thank you for the opportunity, Mr Speaker. I start by thanking the comments and support of the SG and the honourable minister on behalf of the Council of Ministers for the support to this Assembly; we are honoured today.

I may say that it is even a special day and as a Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources, it is a blessing- of course, the regional affairs that will proceed after this report, it is an opportunity to highlight that the objective of this on-spot assessment was to assess the implementation of projects by the LVBC and LVFO and the contribution of the two institutions to food security and climate change resilience.

These are the two items at the heart not only of this Assembly but also part of the priorities of the EAC as per the budget speech we had recently. They are very important, the contributions of Members towards the promotion of these two items are promising and we are encouraged to continue to work even further and deeper to make sure that we raise the bar higher as far as food security, right to food for this Community and climate change are concerned.

On Saturday, we are going to have capacity building of the members and we already thank the contribution of the EAC, your office, Mr Speaker, we thank Members and encourage them to come because we are supporting this report practically. Do not miss because our colleague, Hon.



Amongin, the chairperson of the platform on climate change is organising and that is the reason she is not around with us but you can see how engaged she is. We thank her for the opportunity.

The EALA Women's Caucus is supporting us a lot and there is the inter-generational dialogue of the EALA Women's Caucus. We are all working together as a team and the mood I am reading from the Front Bench today is a mood of family; it is a family. We are now moving forward together as one. I also appreciate the Members who contributed to the support of this report starting with Hon. James Kakooza, Hon. Siranda, Hon. Sankok, Hon. Sadia and Dr Woda by way of information, Hon. Kanini Kega and all honourable members who have stood up to make sure you contribute. You were many; the entire house was excited to contribute.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the facilitation. I beg to reply.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Hon. Francoise, the chairperson. I put the question that the report of the Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources on the On-Spot Assessment of the Implementation of Projects by the Lake Victoria Basin Commission and the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation be adopted.

*(Question put and agreed to.)  
(Report adopted.)*

**The Speaker:** Thank you, honourable members. Let us proceed. Honourable members, there was a small meeting this morning between the Counsel to the Community (CTC), the Secretary-General and my Clerk in which they considered the request from the Minister from the Democratic Republic of Congo who arrived yesterday evening to take oath. As he cannot - he does not speak any English - this meeting considered the recommendation of the last Summit of the Heads of State in November and the CTC advised that he could get assistance and translation in taking this oath. That is why I could delay this meeting because they were still consulting.

That is how we are now authorising him to take oath. The minister from DRC also came in my office this morning at 8.00 a.m. bearing good news about the arrears. He will have to share it with the Chairperson, Council of Ministers, then we will get the outcomes.

Honourable members, I rise to notify you that the minister responsible for the East African Community Affairs from DRC, Hon. Didier Mazenga Mukanzu, is present and would like to take oath. Yes, procedure -

**Mr George Odongo:** Mr Speaker, I appreciate that there is a Summit directive on the use of French. However, to make it consistent with our rules, I request that we suspend our rules that make reference to the use of English so that we can accommodate - *(Interjections)*- No, it is not in the Treaty.

**The Speaker:** Proceed, Hon. Kennedy Mukulia.

**Mr Mukulia:** Our Rules of Procedure provide English as the medium of communication in the House. If it is in the House, we can be able to suspend that rule for the meantime and that is how

it is because this House is governed by the Rules of Procedure and not the Treaty. (*Ms Nduva rose\_*)

**The Speaker:** To enable Hon. George Odongo -

**Ms Veronica Mueni Nduva (The Secretary General of the East African Community):** Yes, for clarification because -

**Mr Odongo:** Mr Speaker, if, indeed, it is provided for in the Treaty, the Treaty takes precedence when it comes to the order of precedence of our laws. If it is in the Treaty, then our hands are tied. It is possible that the minister can proceed.

**The Speaker:** CTC, you are there to advise us and the Community.

**Ms Nduva:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The CTC is out but in our consultation this morning, we said that the Minister will take the oath in French. However, a Member of this House will make the translation in English; so, he will be considered like an aide.

**The Speaker:** I have procedures from Hon. Luke and Hon. Amongin; then, we continue. Hon. Amb. Fatuma Ndangiza, do you want to have the Floor or it was information?

**Amb. Ndangiza:** It is linked to the debate we are having, Mr Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Sorry, can you have the floor?

**Amb. Ndangiza:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. With all due respect and of course, we want our minister to be sworn in, but this is a House of rules and we should not set a precedent because Article 137 of the Treaty is very clear on the language to be officially used in the Community. We know there was a Summit directive urging the Council to fast-track the introduction of Kiswahili and French as official languages and we know processes are going on for the amendment of the Treaty.

Is it in order to go ahead and set this precedence of using French when the Treaty is not yet amended? I wish the CTC could be here and speak for himself as the Council of the Community so that it is on record because the Treaty guides us; it should guide us because we are a House of rules. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Honourable members, if you are all in accordance with the Treaty, our rules and everything we have are not allowing him to take the oath in French; we have to respect that but let me bring the Floor to Hon. Luke, Hon. Amongin, and then I stop there on this side.

**Mr Teny:** [*Ms Amongin: Point of information*] I am not taking it. I want to remind the House that we have members from the DRC and when they took the oath affirmation, they took it in English. It would not be justice to this House if we deviate from the Rules of Procedure. The provision of the Treaty takes precedence over the Rules of Procedure.

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Hon. Amongin -

**Ms Amongin:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Treaty remains our supreme law of governing the EAC and whereas we are very happy that the Minister of DRC would like to make an oath, a precedent has been set in this House where we have nine members from the same Republic who took oath in this House. I would think that Article 137 be respected and we urge the minister to swear in English as the processes of fast-tracking Swahili and French are being worked on so that the Treaty in the near future recognises Swahili and French as official languages of the EAC.

In the interest of time, I propose - because I know that all of us are interested in having the minister take the oath but if the minister can try in English, it would be good or we might have to suspend some rules of our Rules of Procedure and which have to be adopted by the whole House and then, the minister can proceed to take the oath and translation be made as he is taking it. (*Members rose\_*)

**The Speaker:** No, we have honourable - Thank you, Hon. Amongin. Now, we give the Floor back to you.

**Ms Amongin:** Mr Speaker, just to let you know, as I was coming here, I was reading the biography of the Minister who is joining us from DRC and to also let you know; I read that he was Ambassador to Uganda for some time, almost 10 years. I am sure the honourable minister can try to swear in English. The fact that he worked in an English country full time and he was able to communicate with Ugandans very well. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** I have a procedure from the Chairperson, Youth Caucus.

**Mr Mwangi Maina:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity.

**The Speaker:** Then, I will give the Floor to Hon. Ngate, Hon. Caroline and then make a ruling. Hon. Maina you have the Floor, then, I get to others.

**Mr Mwangi Maina:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am turning 30 years old today. (*Applause*) It is a great privilege to be here. We are a House of rules and procedures and our work here is to make laws. Our business should not break laws.

Given the background that we have been given by Hon. Amongin, I think the honourable minister can try and struggle. You will be patient to see him swear as he struggles. We are very patient as a House. Be that it is not the case – (*Interruption*) – Let me finish. Mr Speaker, I am not ready to receive –

**The Speaker:** We have a point of order. But he was on order also.

**Mr Mwangi Maina:** I was on procedure.

**The Speaker:** Okay, let us go to order. Try to be brief.

**Ms Rose Akol:** Rt Hon. Speaker, I rise on a point of order because it seems we do not even want to read and understand the rules. Rule 35 provides for language and it says, “*All proceedings of the House shall be conducted in English language while Kiswahili is being developed as the lingua franca of the Community.*”

This operationalises the Treaty, so, what Hon. Odongo prayed for here was to suspend this rule so that our minister comfortably swears-in, in the language he understands best. Mr Speaker, is it in order for us to continue defying what we have or what we can do in the House to suspend the rule and have our minister here and sticking to a provision in the Treaty, which is operationalised here and yet, we also have powers to suspend this rule because these are our rules?

**The Speaker:** Hon. Maina Mwangi, have you finished?

**Mr Mwangi Maina:** I finished. The other option, Rt Hon. Speaker – and this is the solution that I am offering and it is subject to confirmation by other Members – is that the aide or the person assisting the minister can read in English and the minister will be the one holding the religious book that he will be holding. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Honourable members, let us give the Floor to the Honourable SG and then we rule.

**Ms Veronica Mueni Nduva (The Secretary General of the East African Community):** I thank you, Mr Speaker and Members for the opportunity. I rise on a point of clarification that yes, the honourable minister presented himself this morning. As I stand here, I am standing with an appeal to this Assembly; we have been discussing the whole issue of integration of this Community.

Yesterday, I sat here and listened to a very intense debate around the contribution and participation of Partner States. Here, we have a minister who has come all the way and he is looking forward to participating. The minister also pledged to the Speaker and, indeed, his ambassador told me this morning that they are coming with good news and I even know the good news.

That notwithstanding, the rules of this House are definitely important to implement. Now, there is a suggestion because yes, half the Members are saying even if he is struggling – I wish to put it the other way. If you are given a page in French and asked to try and read it, how easy or hard will that exercise be?

I pray to the Members of this House that it is in our ability to exercise wisdom and political exigency of this situation and consideration and make a wise decision. There is a proposal about the Rules of Procedure. We are not in any way abusing the Treaty or disregarding it. The reference in this point is what is within our ability within the Rules of Procedure in this House.

The honourable minister, if he is allowed, will be represented by an honourable and I underline the word “honourable” member of this House who will be able to translate what this minister is saying. The Clerk and other officers have taken the effort to ensure that the translation of the oath is done by the official translator of this Community. Therefore, I wish to ask, with all humility, that let us exercise this judgement in wisdom.

**Ms Amongin:** Motion -

**The Speaker:** You can move the motion.

12.00

**Ms Jacqueline Amongin (Uganda):** Mr Speaker, having listened to the presentations and speeches from honourable members, there is good will that the minister takes oath. However, I would like to move a motion that we suspend Rule 35 of the Rules of Procedure so that the minister can take oath in a language that he understands because these are also issues of religion. He must swear by what he understands. I beg to move, Rt Hon. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Seconders?

*(Seconded by Hon. David Sankok, Hon. Rose Akol, Hon. Kennedy Mukulia)*

**Hon. Ngate Mangu:** Mr Speaker, No! Hear me out.

**The Speaker:** Honourable members - Hon. Ngate – You do not have control. I am explaining. I did not give you the Floor. *(Several Members rose\_)* Take your seats all of you. Hon. Amongin, have your seat -

Honourable Members, this House is not a public market where everyone can stand up and make noise and do everything. I will never allow this again. We have a motion that has been moved and seconded by many Members. What I have to do is to put the question.

Honourable members, I put the question that this House suspends Rule 35 of the Rules of Procedure and allows the minister to take oath. I put the question.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

**The Speaker:** We shall now proceed. The honourable minister will be given a – The oath will be taken in French, the language he can speak and understand well.

Honourable members, in accordance with Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure of this Assembly, you know that he cannot sit or participate in the proceedings of the House until he takes the oath or affirmation of allegiance to the Treaty as a member of the Assembly.

Rule 5(5) specifically states that, “*When a member first attends to take his or her seat, other than at the first sitting of a new House, he or she shall be brought to the Table by two members and presented by them to the Speaker who shall then administer the oath or affirmation of allegiance to him or her.*”

I, therefore, request any two Members of the House who know the new Member to present him to the Speaker to enable him take the oath. We have hon. Dr Kim – Honourable minister, raise your hand.

## ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS

*The oaths were administered to Mr Didier Mazenga Mukanzu*

**The Speaker:** Honourable members, I have an announcement but I wish that it could be done without the media. Clerk –

Honourable members, I have to suspend this meeting for a while because before I adjourn, I have an announcement to the Members only and the Clerk. You can leave us alone with the Members and ex-officio members. You can come and collect your papers later. It will not take time; just leave us alone. I have suspended the proceedings.

**The Clerk:** We need to put the mace down.

*(The mace was lowered)*

**The Speaker:** Journalists, visitors and officers of the Assembly please exit the Chamber so that Members can have an off camera session.

*(The House was suspended at 12.14 p.m.)*

*(On resumption at 12.35 p.m., the Speaker presiding)*

**The Speaker:** It is now 12.35 p.m. and I have to thank everyone for the discussions we had this morning. They were fruitful and friendly. They were the best we had because it is the first time in the Fifth EALA that our House has been honoured by six ex-officio Members at the same time. We wish that this could continue. We assure them that this House is committed to working closely with the Council and the Secretariat.

**Honourable Member:** Point of information -

**The Speaker:** No, I do not take it.

**Honourable Member:** Point of information, Mr Speaker.

**The Speaker:** No, we are about to adjourn. We assure them that collaboration will be better than before and if honourable ministers should consider again this oversight, this caravan of oversight of my Members. They have been – this will be the first EALA that would have done it. They have been somewhere frustrated by the fact that because of non-remittance of money, they have been stuck. If there is any opportunity, please, reconsider this as we are starting a new journey together. Thank you.

With this, honourable members, I adjourn the House until tomorrow, Saturday at 2.30 p.m. Thank you.

*(The House rose at 12.39 p.m. and adjourned until Saturday, 29 June 2024 at 2.30 p.m.)*