



# SPEECH

by

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OCCASION: **SPECIAL SITTING OF EAST  
AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
PLENARY**

VENUE: **EAC HEADQUARTERS,  
ARUSHA, TANZANIA**

DATE: **31<sup>ST</sup> MAY, 2016**



Excellencies: **Mama Maria Nyerere** and **Miriam Obote,**

**Rt. Hon. Daniel Fred Kidega,** Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly,

**Hon. Members of the Assembly,**

**1. Thank you all for your invitation to be here with you, and thank you especially to the people of Tanzania for their very warm welcome.**



**2. I** am sure I speak for both my sisters – **Mama Maria Nyerere** and **Mama Miriam Obote** – when I say it is a true joy to join in this special seating of the Assembly.

**3. As** participants in the liberation struggle, it is a peculiar pleasure for us to be here. Like many men, women and youth of that time, each of us endured, in some way, the hard and harrowing experience of being a part of the ~~fight for~~ freedom.

*struggle*



*We rejoice and celebrate.*

4. ~~Each of us later felt the hope that rose to ever greater heights as one by one, our countries attained to independence. Yet even as we experienced that hope, each of us understood, in our hearts, that just as our struggles had been shared, so too our destiny would be one—and our nations would only rise from the ruins of racism, exploitation and oppression, in so far as they rose together.~~



— Miria  
obote  
+ Marica + myself

**5. In 1967,** all three of us were witness to the establishment of a community that spoke to that shared sentiment. **The East African Community** was built on the understanding that our nations and our peoples were stronger together. **Together,** we could speak decisively to the powers of the world: as equal partners advancing a common agenda. **Together,** we could maximize on the many resources that existed within our mutual borders ~~and create more profit~~ <sup>for the benefit of</sup> for our people.

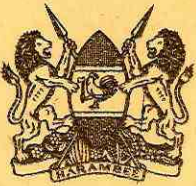


6. Together we <sup>can</sup> ~~could~~ take advantage of our respective cultural and economic strengths ~~as part of a win-win bargain.~~ ~~So~~ the East African Community was, to us, a ticket to greater dignity, prosperity and possibility for all <sup>People of</sup> East Africans ~~and indeed for all Africans.~~

7. Those were the ideals that the EAC was built on nearly **50 years ago.** by <sup>The</sup> ~~our~~ founding Presidents of Kenya Uganda + Tanzania — name them



8. ~~Sadly, that particular building, shaken as it was by storms that perhaps only the former Presidents themselves know best, fell to the ground~~ In **1977**, <sup>The East African Community broke-up</sup> Fortunately, however, the foundation that upheld it ~~did not~~ <sup>and</sup> <sup>together was still strong and</sup> in **2000** you, <sup>the rebuilding of the Community began</sup> our children, ~~began once again the work of rebuilding our community.~~ **With** new tools, new ideas, and the benefit of hindsight you ~~built~~ <sup>was reborn</sup> a new <sup>East</sup> <sup>afria</sup> community based on the old dreams and dogma of the founding fathers and mothers of our <sup>respective</sup> ~~region.~~ <sup>Countries</sup>



9. It is a credit to <sup>the</sup> your hard work and persistence—<sup>of the EALA</sup> and the hard work and ~~persistence~~ of <sup>the</sup> your respective governments—that today, ~~that~~ <sup>our</sup> ~~your~~ <sup>EALA</sup> ~~community~~ is more vibrant and active than ever. Indeed, with the rapid changes that have taken place, I am hopeful that the unity of the region will only continue to deepen and that <sup>of</sup> the old dream of a consolidated, borderless East Africa ~~headed by~~ ~~one President,~~ will one day be realized.





**10.** As we work towards the fulfillment of that dream; and as we seek to become one family, let us be wary of actions and feelings that can breed disunity and disrupt our progress. Let us safeguard our vision by actively fostering, within East Africa, a spirit of partnership and positive engagement. I think there are two levels at which we must do that.

**11.** At the grassroots level, we must continue to cultivate an appreciation for the diversity in the region, and for the ideal of a unified region.



**12.** Ultimately, unless the dream of integration is held in the hearts of ordinary citizens—the work of this Assembly, and the years of work Governments have invested in this community, will be in vain. So it is incumbent on this Assembly to ensure that everyday men and women are onboard at every stage of this integration process.

**13.** At the leadership level, we must set the example for all people by engaging each other with sincerity, respect, and honor.



**14.** Our engagements must demonstrate to East African citizens that partnership is possible and preferable. ~~If we treat each other with suspicion, how will our people trust one another? If we see one another's progress as problematic to our ambitions, how will our citizens believe in the possibilities of Pan-Africanism?~~ <sup>As</sup> Yet as leaders, we know best that unity is in all our interests. **We** know that we are not foes, but friends. *Wangari Maathai*



**15. We** know that each nation's prosperity is good for the region as a whole and we know that ~~really,~~ East Africans have enough ~~enemies~~ <sup>challenges to deal with such as</sup> ~~including~~ poverty, insecurity, illiteracy and disease—without creating new ones ~~among themselves.~~

**16. So** let us operate from a spirit of sincerity, not selfishness, seeking to help rather than hinder one another. **Indeed,** that is the African way.



**17. I** want to particularly urge the three big brothers, of this organization - **Tanzania, Uganda** and **Kenya** - secure the East African project by protecting newer entrants into the community who might be slightly weaker than you old members are. **I** think the biggest principle that emerged from the fall of colonialism and apartheid in Africa was this: one will never profit for long when they profit at someone else's expense. **Remember that. Remember that** the success of any member of this community is ultimately the success of all members.



**18.** As you all pursue your own interests, do not neglect to consider one another's welfare because that is what good neighbours do and we must learn to be good neighbours before we can learn to be a full-fledged family adopted into a new state.

**19.** No one can deny that since its inception, the **East African Community** has grown tremendously. A lot of progress has been made and I am grateful for the efforts that have gone into strengthening the Community.



**20. I** am grateful for the incredible investments <sup>our</sup> Governments have made in this project, and I too remain personally invested in its ideals. **So** today, my message is ~~really~~ very simple: ~~let us continue~~. Let us continue working, and investing. Let us summon the boldness, the vision and the will to work towards the success of our radical initiative. That is what our region needs and that is what our people need.

**Thank you and God bless you all.**