



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)

The Official Report of the Proceedings of the East African Legislative Assembly

41ST SITTING – FIRST MEETING – THIRD SESSION: FIFTH ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 31 October 2024

The East African Legislative Assembly met at 10.08 a.m. at the Parliament House, Kampala, Uganda

PRAYER

(The Speaker, Hon. Joseph Ntakirutimana, in the Chair)

(The Assembly was called to order)

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

The Speaker: Honourable Members, good morning! I do not have a major communication to make today. However, I would like to welcoming our members who arrived from Arusha yesterday. Dr. Itto, also attended the EAC MSMEs Trade Fair that is taking place in Juba.

The other thing is that we have sent the letter to the Chairperson to the Council of Ministers. We hope that they will react positively. We have also contacted Kenyan leaders and you have informed them that we need the Minister of Kenya in charge of the EAC because of the bills that we are yet to consider here. We hope that she responds positively.

As I said yesterday, if we realise that there is no member of the Council around during this entire plenary, it will not be proper. The Community, does not have enough money to, waste. We are here because our citizens have paid taxes. We are here to be here to do business; not to spend holidays. We hope that our ministers will be around. If they will not be here; we cannot do anything about it. We will be obliged to postpone some businesses.

We will have wasted time and money. We will find a way to address this issue so that our people know that we did not conduct our business as was programmed or planned. Thank you.

Next order. Proceed, Chairperson of the Committee on Legal Rules and Privileges.

LAYING OF PAPERS

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LEGAL, RULES AND PRIVILEGES ON THE INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGATIONS LEVELLED AGAINST THE IMMEDIATE FORMER

10.11

Mr Mashaka Ngole (Tanzania): Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay the report of the Committee On Legal Rules and Privileges on the investigation of the allegations levelled against the immediate former Secretary General as per the documents laid before the Assembly on the 6th and 12th March 2024. I beg to lay.

(Hon Mashaka Ngole laid the documents on the Table)

The Speaker: Thank you.

Next item.

MOTION SEEKING LEAVE OF THE ASSEMBLY TO INTRODUCE A PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL

The Speaker: Proceed Hon. (Dr.) Woda Jeremiah to move the motion.

Dr Woda Jeremiah (South Sudan): Right, honourable speaker. I am standing to move a motion seeking leave of the Assembly to introduce a private member bill, that this Assembly Pursuant to the provisions of Article 59(1) of the Treaty and Rule 64(5) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, do grant leave to Hon. Woda Jeremiah to introduce a Private Member's Bill entitled: "The East African Community Prevention and Control of Transboundary Animal and Zoonotic Disease Bill, 2024."

I beg to move.

The Speaker: Do you have seconders:

Dr Woda Jeremiah (South Sudan): Yes, I do.

The Speaker: Ah, almost the entire house.

(Secoded by Amb. Fatuma Ndongiza, Hon. Sankok David, Hon. Amongin Jacqueline)

You can now justify your Motion.

10.14

Dr Woda Jeremiah (South Sudan): Honourable Speaker, this is a Motion seeking leave of the Assembly to introduce a bill to provide for prevention and control of the transboundary animal and zoonotic disease within the Community. Moved under article 49(1), 59(1) of the Treaty and Rule 26 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly.

WHEREAS under Article 108 of the Treaty, the Partner States agreed to harmonise policies, legislation regulations for enforcement of pests and disease control and to cooperate in surveillance, diagnosis and control strategies of transboundary pests and animal diseases;

AND WHEREAS the Council has adopted several policies and strategies to facilitate the cooperation of the Partner States, including the EAC Livestock Policy, 2014 and the EAC Regional Strategy on Prevention and Control of Transboundary Animal and Zoonotic Diseases;

GRATEFUL to Partner States for enhancing joint cross-border cooperation which is essential in the prevention and control of transboundary animal and zoonotic diseases and strengthening the national initiatives for the management of the transboundary animal diseases along the interface of the animal and human ecosystem;

RECOGNIZING that the management of transboundary animal diseases impacts on the production, value addition and trade in livestock and livestock products, public health and tourism in the Community;

CONCERNED that outbreaks of Transboundary Animal Diseases cause devastating economic losses to pastoralists and livestock farmers and the need for the Community to collectively prevent and control Transboundary Animal Diseases due to their negative impact on livestock agriculture, trade and food security;

CONVINCED that it is necessary for the Community to collectively step-up measures to harmonise and standardize systems for surveillance of livestock and wildlife in order to detect, prevent and control transboundary diseases and zoonotic diseases and establish and enhance early warning systems to ensure rapid detection and control of disease outbreaks;

AWARE that under Article 59(1) of the Treaty any member may propose any motion or introduce any Bill in the Assembly;

RECOGNIZING that rule 64 (5) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly requires that a Private Member's Bill shall be introduced first by way of Motion to which shall be attached the proposed draft of the Bill;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Assembly as follows: -

THAT in accordance with Article 49(1) and 59(1) of the Treaty and Rule 64 (5) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the Assembly grants leave to HON. Dr. Odok woda jeremiah to introduce a bill entitled the eac control of transboundary animal and Zoonotic Diseases Bill to

provide for coordinated and enhanced detection, prevention and control of transboundary animal diseases in the Community.

I beg to move. Right, Honourable Speaker.

The EAC is endowed with a lot of resources. Much of them is in form of livestock. We know that four of the eight partner states including Somalia are very rich in livestock. Where I come from, South Sudan alone, the estimated number of cattle is 12 million, the sheep---

Ms Jacqueline Amongin (Uganda): Procedure, Right, Honourable Speaker. Before Dr Woda proceeds with this justification of her motion. I would like to raise a procedural issue in regards to our rules of procedure. The said bill has to be attached so that as a member presents the motion and we give leave to the House, to the member to proceed with the bill, the bill must be attached as per the rules.

I have tried juggling around to see the bill, and it is in the same vein that I have two pending private member's bills to present in this House, and the drafting team has insisted that they must attach a bill in order for one to seek leave. That is the one of FGM and on climate change. It is also in our rules that when a member presents a private member's bill or the Council of Minister brings a bill to the House, there must be a draft attached.

This is a wonderful motion that Honourable Dr. Woda has brought to the House. However, before we do that, It would be paramount that the relevant bill is given to us so that we can follow. Honourable Speaker, are we procedurally moving well? We need your guidance, Sir?

Dr Woda Jeremiah (South Sudan): Right, Honourable Speaker, I think it is the fault of the Clerk's Office because the draft bill is sent to them. They just gave me the motion. The draft bill is sent to them. They should print it and give it to the members.

The Speaker: You are right. The Office of the Clerk have to do their job. This is not the first time. Honourable Members, can we proceed as you wait to get copies of the bill? Some members have copies while others do not have.

Mr Mashaka Ngole (Tanzania): Information. Mr Speaker, we cannot proceed until the bill is availed to us. Otherwise, the leave that is sought will be barred. Thank you.

The Speaker: You are right.

The office of the clerk must recognise that this is their fault. We will come back to this item when bills will be available, when every member will be okay. With the bill, we proceed with the next item.

Call Honourable Francine Rutazana to move the motion. Do you have copies of the bill?

Hon Members: Yes.

The Speaker: If you have it, let us proceed. You will have to lay your bill on the table.

MOTION FOR SEEKING LEAVE OF THE ASSEMBLY TO INTRODUCE A PRIVATE
MEMBER'S BILL

10.24

Ms Francine Rutazana (Rwanda): Right, Honourable Speaker, I beg to move that this Assembly Pursuant to the provisions of Article 59(1) of the Treaty and Rule 64(5) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, do grant leave to Hon. Francine Rutazana to introduce a Private Member's Bill entitled: "The East African Community Medical Products Bill, 2024."

The Speaker: Do you have seconders?

Ms Francine Rutazana (Rwanda): Yes.

(Seconded by Hon. David ole Sankok, Hon. Uwumukiza Françoise, Hon. Dennis Namara, Hon. Siranda Gerald Blacks and Hon. Gideon Gatpan)

You can proceed to move the motion.

Ms Francine Rutazana (Rwanda): Honourable Speaker, this is a Motion for leave to introduce a bill to promote access to essential medicines and medical products produced within the Community. This Motion is moved under Articles 49(1), 59(1) of the Treaty and Rule 26 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly.

WHEREAS medicines provide important life-saving measures, crucial preventive therapies for diseases, relief for chronic illnesses, prolonging life-span and improving quality of life for patients;

WHEREAS equitable access to safe and affordable medicines is necessary for the attainment of the highest possible standard of health;

AND WHEREAS under Article 118 of the Treaty, the Partner States committed to promote the management of health delivery systems, better planning mechanisms to enhance efficiency of health care services within the Partner States, harmonised drug registration procedures and adoption of good procurement practices in respect of medicines;

AWARE that in 2017, the Council adopted the EAC Regional Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan of Action 2017 – 2027 which has several strategies and priority areas for the EAC Pharmaceutical sector including establishing a regional Roadmap for local manufacturers to upgrade and attain internationally recognized quality standards, introducing and implementing incentive packages and appropriate financing schemes for local pharmaceutical manufacturers and establishing a regional framework for mutual recognition of harmonized medicines registration and GMP Inspections;

FURTHER AWARE that all Partner States heavily rely on pharmaceutical imports, especially for branded and innovator products and the inability of local pharmaceutical industry to sufficiently meet local demands for low-cost generic production and pharmaceutical innovation has allowed foreign companies to strongly dominate the pharmaceuticals market with domestically produced medicines having less than 20 per cent of the value of the pharmaceutical market in the Community;

CONCERNED that the Community has not established favourable policies for the local producers or adequately promoted them to be able to meet the pharmaceutical needs of the Community and compete with imported drugs;

NOTING that there are still discrepancies in the registration procedures for essential medicines provided for by the national health policies and regulations of the Partner States;

FURTHER CONCERNED that reliable access to affordable and quality-assured medicines in East Africa remains a huge challenge since most medicines in the Community are still paid for directly by citizens through out-of-pocket payments;

RECALLING that during the 4th Assembly, I was granted leave to introduce the EAC Pharmaceuticals Bill, which I duly introduced but was not concluded by the Assembly before it lapsed in December, 2022 due to time.

ACKNOWLEDGING that during the public hearings by the General-Purpose Committee on the EAC Pharmaceuticals Bill, the Partner States made several comments and recommendations which have now been incorporated in the EAC Medical Products Bill;

CONVINCED that it is necessary for the Partner States to improve the management of medical products in the Community to ensure access to affordable, quality essential medicines, including those for the treatment of various priority communicable and non-communicable diseases;

FURTHER CONVINCED that one of the ways by which the Community can improve both availability of essential medicines and their quality is to promote and support local production of essential medicines and medical products required by the Community;

AWARE that under Article 59(1) of the Treaty any member may propose any motion or introduce any Bill in the Assembly;

RECOGNIZING that rule 64 (5) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly requires that a Private Member's Bill shall be introduced first by way of Motion to which shall be attached the proposed draft of the Bill;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Assembly as follows:

THAT in accordance with Article 49(1) and 59(1) of the Treaty and Rule 64 (5) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the Assembly grants leave to hon. Francine Rutazana to introduce a Bill entitled the East African Community Medical Products Bill to promote access to essential

medicines and to promote the procurement and use of medical products manufactured in the Community.

Honourable Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker: Thank you. Now you can justify it.

Ms Francine Rutazana (Rwanda): Thank you, Honourable Speaker. This is East African Pharmaceutical Bill, as I have already alluded to in the motion. It was introduced in the Fourth EALA but was not concluded because of time. I came again to the Fifth EALA Assembly to seek a leave so that we can proceed and to make it a bill for it to be assented to by the partner states and become an Act of the Community.

Honourable Speaker, we have some challenges around the pharmaceutical sector in the EAC, which will be addressed by the bill. One is the lack of common standards for pharmaceutical usage to facilitate collaboration between national medicine regulatory agencies which are established in our respective partner states and to initiate joint regional actions and programmes which will support the local production and also the distribution of pharmaceutical products in the region. There is also a lack of EAC mutual recognition standard for registration of medicines which affect the medicine distribution and pricing in the region. There is no regulation, which is harmonizes the work of national medicine regulatory agencies.

There is also a lack of EAC pharmaceutical public procurement, to come up with a list of essential medicines, which are produced in the region. We therefore give priority to other products which are brought from the international market to come into the Community. This bill will harmonise the procedure for the procurement to be done within the Community and give priority to products that are produced in the region. There is insufficient infrastructure to facilitate intra-EAC trade to ease market access in the distribution of pharmaceutical products as it is also a challenge for other products regarding trade.

There is a high dependency on outside medicine suppliers with effect to cost of pharmaceutical products and hinders the development of local industry in the area of pharmaceutical in EAC. There is also inconsistency in the pharmaceutical programme toward the Sustainable Development Goals especially under SDGs 3 and SDGs 9 with regard to good health to all.

Right Honourable Speaker, there is a list of legal frameworks which are supporting the initiation of this bill. One is the article 118 of the treaty providing cooperation in health and promoting the management of health delivery systems and harmonisation of health policy and the regulations to achieve quality health cooperation of pharmaceutical products in the region. There is also the Council of Ministers directive of 2017, which adopted a regional pharmaceutical manufacturing plan of action whose several strategies include establishing a regional roadmap for local manufacturing to upgrade and attain recognised quality standards, establishing a regional framework for mutual recognition of harmonised medicine registration and good manufacturing practises among others.

We also have also Article 79 of the EAC Industrialisation Policy, which calls for self-sustaining and balanced industrial growth. This will help to improve the competitiveness of the industry sector and to expand trade. There is the EAC Customs Union Act 2006, which covers all pharmaceutical products; the raw material and the finished product which attract zero per cent of the CET for raw material produced in the region.

There is a directive from the head of state which was issued during their retreat on 2017. The directive requires the Secretariat to put in place a regional roadmap for the EAC pharmaceutical products to be improved in the region but also the second EAC regional pharmaceutical manufacturing plan of action 2018 roadmap to guide the EAC and its partner states toward building an efficient and effective regional pharmaceutical manufacturing industry.

Those are the legal frameworks which are now supporting the initiation of the bid on the EAC pharmaceutical bill. We have some benefits from the health access. One it will reduce the cost on the access to medicine for people because we will have those pharmaceutical products coming from the region rather than going to seek them at the level outside the region, Africa or worldwide. This bill will improve access to essential medicine for the citizens because the price will be affordable. People will access the essential medicines. There is a higher supply of medicines whereby local manufacturers will be having better supply chain mechanisms in place than importers. There will also be better adaptation of medicines to the local needs.

The economic benefits which will be brought by the bill are many. One is job creation and capacity building for the local manufacturers. There is also a value chain system of production and delivery, which will be improved. We will be independent from the international supplier. We will make the local industry growing. We will be having competition in the region and international market, further stimulus to economic growth and industrial investment, increase the tax income, which will in turn enhance effective public demand, and promotion of medical innovation, exchange of manufacturing practises and increasing skills and knowledge in the field of medicine.

Right Honourable Speaker, I beg Honourable Members to grant me leave for the development of the EAC Pharmaceutical Bill and ensure a continuous collaboration with the members of the Assembly for the bill to embrace the EAC needs and aspiration for the welfare of the EAC citizens.

I beg to submit, Right Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Honourable Members, I will now propose, the question.

The Motion on the floor is that this Assembly do grant leave to Honourable Francine Rutazana to introduce a private member's bill entitled the East African Medical Products Bill 2024. The debate is now open.

Mr James Kakooza (Uganda): Right Honourable Speaker. I do not intend to interrupt but I think the CTC should clarify on the rules of seeking leave and even discussing the bill. The practices I know that once a member comes here on the floor and is given permission, he goes ahead to draft the bill and it comes on the Floor as a first step. What are we going to discuss? The CTC should advise us seeking a leave and then discussing a bill. I think that there is a lacuna in our Rules of

Procedure and the Treaty. When I come to the House to seek leave, I want to go and prepare with the Council to give me permission granted by the House. It seems the bill has been laid on the table and we are going to discuss it. Maybe I need that clarification from the CTC

Ms Amongin Jacqueline (Uganda): Right Honourable Speaker, I would like to give further clarification in regards to introduction of the bills to the House. I know that when a Member introduces a bill, it is still a draft. The purpose of introducing this bill to the House is for members to grant permission for the member to now go and process the bill. Honourable Francine has presented a motion granting her leave to introduce a private member's bill entitled Access to Essential Medicines and Medical Products within the Community.

Honourable Speaker, I thought it would be in good faith for us for the seconder of this motion to speak to the motion requesting leave of the House and then the leave is granted or not granted. The purpose of this Motion is not for any member to debate this bill because it would be pre-empting what the member is going to bring to this House.

Honourable Speaker, the clarification as the CTC even comes, as per the rules, I would imagine that the seconder of this motion comes, speaks to the motion, and the speaker puts a question, members say 'Ayes' or 'Nay', and then we say, Honourable Francine, proceed with the journey. That is the clarification that I wanted to give. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Let us hear from the CTC.

10.30

Dr Anthony Kafumbe (The Counsel to Community): Right Honourable Speaker. Matters of these are covered under Rule 64. I am happy that Honourable Amongin said it. When you look at Rule 64 (5), it states: "*A private member's bill shall be introduced first by way of motion to which shall be attached the proposed draft of the bill.*"

What you have here is actually a draft, and once you grant a Member permission, she will then have an opportunity to go and consult and enrich before it comes back. That is the process you do. You only have the draft here that she has attached, and the expectation is that you give value and then she will go and enrich it so that you have a substantive document to look at.

The Speaker: The debate is open. (*Loud Consultations*) The CTC, can you clarify? Do we need to debate this or not?

Dr Gerald Siranda (Uganda): Right Honourable Speaker, the order I am standing to raise is critical because it is becoming a norm. The same thing happened when we held plenary in Nairobi and I was the seconder of a motion. The principle is that after the mover of the motion has moved the motion, the next person to speak before you open debate is the seconder of the motion. Are we in order? Are we moving well? Is it in order that you order for the debate of the whole House without instructing that the seconder of the motion, seconds the motion?

The Speaker: The CTC, can we debate this? I am seeking a clear guidance from him. Yes or no?

Dr Anthony Kafumba (The Counsel to Community): Right Honourable, I do not think you are even debating - you can allow some, you limit it and then you put the question.

The Speaker: That is what we are doing.

Honourable Francine? I do not see your seconders here.

Ms Francine Rutazana (Rwanda): Right Honourable Speaker, the first seconder was Honourable Gai Deng. However, she is travelling from Nairobi at the moment. Honourable Odongo is standing in for her.

The Speaker: Very good. We will give the Floor to Honourable Odongo. Then we will give the Floor to Honourable Amongin, followed by Honourable Sankok, then Honourable Francois, then Honourable Dr. Aisha, and we will stop there.

10.46

Mr George Odongo (Uganda): Right Honourable Speaker, thank you so much for your guidance. The mover of this motion has given a very compelling case for leave so that we have this bill processed.

Right Honourable Speaker, in 2019, the world woke up to a global pandemic. The COVID-19 taught us a lesson that if we do not prepare, if we do not build internal capacity, through creating regional pharmaceutical industry that can sustain our needs, then we are exposed. In 2020, during the COVID-19, you saw that the World Health Organisation was faced with the challenge of providing essential medicine to deal with the pandemic. In the pecking order, I think Africa ranked the least considered. This bill speaks very much to building our capacity as a region, and being able to strengthen our pharmaceutical industry so that we can produce essential medicine for our people.

Right, Honourable Speaker, the flooding of this market with foreign medicines has undermined research and development. It has also undermined the production of our own and strengthening of our own knowledge systems, traditional knowledge systems. Research is very important for any country to develop. You need to invest in research and development. This bill seeks to call upon the region to invest in research and development, so that we have a very strong pharmaceutical sector.

Right, Honourable Speaker, we have policies in place. However, we need the necessary legislation so that we can effectively have these policies gain more traction in the way we do regulations and the way the sector is managed. There is a lot of medicine that floods the East African Community that flies above the radar of the regulatory bodies that we have. We have differences; we are wearing different lenses in the manner with which our different partner states look at the medicines that enter. This is predisposing many of our young people to abuse of certain drugs. We do not have a regulatory system that mirrors each other. We have different regulatory systems and allow some of the medicines to enter into our markets, which are predisposing our young people to abuse of drugs.

Right, Honourable Speaker, we have a regional roadmap, 2017-2027. This regional roadmap looks at harmonisation of these policies and procedures. Coming up with a regional legislation will allow for; investment of resources, creation of institutions, investment in personnel, and building of the capacity, regional capacity, so that we have a Community that is self-sufficient. Uganda, for example, is doing very well in terms of investing resources in research. However, it is not enough for just having one country doing this or another, you know, working in silos. I think the cost of, you know, managing this sector and making this sector much more integrated is less when we work together, when we coordinate, when the Sectoral Council of Health works and invests together. Just imagine that we have one big research centre in Uganda focusing on tropical medicine, and then you have another maybe doing other essential medicines in other parts of the Community. We will have built our capacity. We are spending a lot of money travelling abroad, essentially because we are not developing our own capacity in the region. This bill speaks to that. I beg the House to support the motion, so that the Honourable Francine is given the opportunity to develop this bill, so that we have an EAC Act.

I beg to submit, Right Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Honourable Dr. Anne Itto should speak next. I am sorry that I had not seen her name here.

Ms Mary Mugenyi (Uganda): Procedure, Mr. Speaker. You put a question to the CTC about the procedure of presenting motion seeking leave for private members' bills. I think it is clear that we do not need to debate it two times. We do not need to debate at this stage, from how I understood. The motion is presented seeking for leave, it is seconded, and then the question is put. That is the procedure. Otherwise, we are going to go on in a wrong practise. This is what the CTC said. If we debate it now, then when the member comes back to present the bill, we are going to debate it again. We are going to be doing the same work. In the interest of time, I would like to beg that we follow the rules.

Mr Mashaka Ngole (Tanzania): Point of clarification, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, our rules are very clear. The motion that has been brought by Honourable Francine, though it is for seeking leave, it has the same effect as the other motions. The rule that guides us on determining a motion is Rule 31 of our Rules of Procedure. It states-

'(i) When a motion has been moved and seconded, the speaker shall propose the question thereon in the same terms as the motion, and debate may then take place upon the question.

(ii) At the conclusion of the debate, speaker shall put the question.'

Mr. Speaker, we have a motion seeking leave. This house is brought to, is asked to determine whether to grant leave or not. How can the house determine that motion without debating? We are not debating about the bill. We are debating about the sought leave. It has been justified and seconded. We are supposed to debate on the motion for leave, so that the house will then be asked whether to consider that motion and determine or not. Debate must be opened.

The Speaker: Honourable members, we are losing time for nothing.

Mr James Kakooza (Uganda): Procedure, right Honourable Speaker. I think some of us who have been in the house for quite a long time, there are practices and norms in the house that they do not need to be compromised. If a motion is specific, especially on the private member's bill, that is what rule 64 says. There must be process. A motion, a general motion does not get mixed up with a specific rule. This is a private member's bill, and the law says, the rule says, anybody seeking leave must bring a draft. When you bring a draft, the only thing you can say, is for parliament to grant that permission or not. This is a specific rule that anybody introducing a private member's bill, you must follow the process.

It is not like any other motions. So the best way, the best practise in the house, when somebody comes here to seek for a leave, your draft is drafted, is to go ahead, either go and reach your motion or not to be given permission. The best practises in commonwealth for somebody seeking a leave, you cannot repeat it and you are preempting what the move of the motion is going to do. You repeat yourself when the bill comes for the second reading. That is what Honourable Mary was saying and that is the practise. The moment you compromise it, the HANSARD will be very funny. The ones who read the *Hansard* will notice that it will be very funny. This is motion for somebody seeking a leave.

Ms Jacqueline Amongin (Uganda): Thank you so much Honourable Kakooza for the information. Right Honourable Speaker, to me as per the rules of procedure, we are proceeding well. A motion has been presented seeking leave of the house. If you look at Rule 64, all what the speaker needs to do is to guide the house that when you are going to second this motion, you don't debate the content of the motion, but you either stand debate to support that the member be given leave to present a private member's bill. However, you are not going to debate on the content because already this is not a bill. The debate will be during the Second Reading as per the rules. That is when we are supposed to debate the bill itself. All those names that the Speaker has read will come here to second the movers of the bill, but not to debate the content of the bill. That is the information that I want to give. Thank you so much.

Mr James Kakooza (Uganda): Right Honourable Speaker, I gave her the way. I am still on the Floor. You can see the contradiction, even the information which has been given. The contradiction is, the contradiction is, this is still a draft, by the way, and it is not yet a bill. If there is anybody opposing, you could say I am opposing, the question should be put, somebody to go ahead, draft, arrange the bill as it is, and give an enrichment to that. However, when it comes to be a full bill, that is when it will go to all these stages. In this case, somebody is just only seeking a leave to go and prepare a bill in a normal way. When you debate, you are preempting and you are speculating, and our rules do not allow to debate in that spatial.

The Speaker: Honourable Members, I have asked the CTC who is with us to guide us, and he was on record. He said that we should give thoughtful debate to some. Am I right, CTC? Take the microphone.

Dr Anthony Kafumba (The Counsel to Community): Yes, right Honourable Speaker, I said you restrict. I would not even call it a debate because you are looking at a draft. You are interrogating, a justification of what she is presenting, and then you put the question. You have a draft; you do not have a bill yet. You have a draft and it cannot be perfect. Why are we debating? You are just, some kind of just interrogating the motion.

The Speaker: So there is no need for debating.

Counsel to Community (Dr Anthony Kafumba): No, we are not debating.

The Speaker: Honourable Members, this is our Community Counsel. He has said no debate. No debate. We proceed. It is ruled. Now I have to put the question that, I put the question, that this Assembly grant leave to Honourable Rutazana to introduce a private member's bill entitled the East African Community Medical Products Bill, 2024? Those in favour say aye.

(Question put and agreed to)

(Motion adopted – Leave granted)

The Speaker: We can proceed.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY URGING THE COUNCIL OF
MINISTERS TO ENHANCE MARITIME TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE
BLUE ECONOMY BY LINKING ALL LAKES AND RIVERS IN THE COMMUNITY TO
THE EAC TRANSPORT CORRIDORS

Mr David ole Sankok (Kenya): Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. I beg to move that *this Assembly do resolve to urge the Council of Ministers to enhance maritime transport and development of the Blue Economy by linking all Lakes and Rivers in the Community to the EAC Transport Corridors.* I beg to move.

The Speaker: Do we have seconders?

Mr David ole Sankok (Kenya): Yes, I do.

(Seconded by Honourable Kennedy Kalonzo, Amb Fatuma Ndangiza and

Honourable Mary Mugenyi)

The Speaker: You can move the Motion.

11.03

Mr David ole Sankok (Kenya): Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker.

WHEREAS pursuant to Article 111 of the Treaty, Partner States agreed to foster co-operation in the joint and efficient management and sustainable utilization of natural resources and to ensure

sustainable utilization of natural resources like lakes, wetlands and other aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems;

AND WHEREAS under Articles 93 and 94 of the Treaty Partner States committed to promote the co-ordination and harmonisation of their maritime transport policies and establish a common maritime transport policy and to harmonise their inland waterways transport policies and adopt, harmonise and simplify rules, regulations and administrative procedures governing waterways transport on their common navigable inland waterways;

AWARE that the Community is richly and naturally endowed with water bodies, including lakes such as Lake Victoria and Lake Tanganyika, rivers such as River Nile, and underground water, in addition to a vast coastline with unique potential, opportunities and resources for economic exploitation in fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, transport, ports, coastal mining, and energy.

RECOGNISING that these resources which are existing naturally in the Community are potential drivers of national and regional economic development as their efficient utilization can easily facilitate and promote sustainable development;

FURTHER AWARE that the Community established the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) as an institution of the Community with mandate to coordinate maritime transport safety and security, and prevention of marine pollution by vessels on Lake Victoria;

NOTING that although several legal and policy instruments have been adopted by the Community for the development of the Blue Economy, including the Tripartite Agreement on Inland Waterway Transport, the Protocol on Sustainable Development of Lake Victoria Basin, the Lake Victoria Transport Act and the East African Community Blue Economy Strategy, the Community has not fully tapped into the potential of the blue economy as a driver for sustainable development;

CONCERNED that despite the development of several key legal and policy instruments, the programmes adopted and implemented by the Community have not leveraged the abundance of the natural endowments and resources of the Community or created the impact required to trigger sustainable development and economic growth of the Partner States;

CONCERNED that marine transport in the Community faces several challenges including inadequate infrastructure, such as port facilities and navigation aids, which can hinder the efficiency of transport on lakes and rivers within the region;

FURTHER CONCERNED that although the Republic of Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania have taken the lead in implementing measures to revive maritime transport by building and expanding ports and shipping facilities to extend maritime reach and establishing National Coast Guard Services and Task Force to oversee their territorial waters and resources, there is need urgent need for to strengthen coordination and collaboration mechanisms to secure success in managing these valuable aquatic resources for sustainable development and to link the existing waterbodies to the EAC transport corridors to facilitate trade and development;

CONVINCED that Lake Victoria, Lake Tanganyika, River Nile and other waterbodies in the Community provide a huge water mass for inland water transport that can be harnessed with appropriate ports and piers with docking facilities and experienced service providers to facilitate increased economic integration in the Community;

FURTHER CONVINCED that Lake Victoria, River Nile, Lake Tanganyika and other water bodies in the Community are vital for marine transport and the sustainable development of the blue economy and can serve as essential transportation routes within the region if connected to the recognised transport corridors through appropriate infrastructural developments;

AWARE that under Article 49(2)(d) of the Treaty, the Assembly may discuss any matter pertaining to the Community and make recommendations to the Council;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Assembly as follows -

THAT in accordance with Article 49(2) (d) of the Treaty, the Assembly urges the Council of Ministers and the Partner States to adopt and implement policies and programmes that facilitate effective and productive maritime transport and development of the blue economy by:

- a) Promoting the Linking and connecting all lakes and rivers in the Community to the EAC transport corridors;*
- b) Facilitating fast-tracking the building, operating and maintaining of wagon vessels, ferries, boats, cruise ships to facilitate and promote marine transport in the Community;*
- c) Engaging and involving the private sector investors in the provision of ports, infrastructure and marine transport facilities within the Community.*

Honourable Speaker, this motion is self-explanatory. The EAC is an economic block that is strategically placed and sandwiched between two oceans.

The Speaker: Are you justifying it now? Had you moved?

Mr David ole Sankok (Kenya): Honourable Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker: Now justify your motion.

No, you do not need seconders.

Mr David ole Sankok (Kenya): Thank you, Honourable Speaker. You are always guiding us well. Thank you for your knowledge and wisdom.

I have said that this motion is actually self-explanatory. EAC is an economic block that is strategically placed. It is sandwiched between two major oceans in the world, the Indian Ocean and Antarctic Ocean to the west and the Gulf of Aden, meaning we can strategically do business with the Far East using Indian Ocean that is China, Russia, India and all those countries.

We can also do business using water transport to the Middle East and the European nation using the Gulf of Aden through Somalia. We can as well do business with the Far West, South America and North America using DRC, the connection to the Atlantic Ocean.

Honourable Speaker, again, we have 6,500 kilometres of coastline. If you consider the Indian Ocean coastline, the Gulf of Aden and the little around 40 kilometres in DRC and the coastlines of Zanzibar, we have a very long coastline that can enable us to do business. We have eight member states with 350 million citizens, which is a market bigger than that one of America. Honourable Speaker, we have the largest and the second largest water tower in Africa, the Congo Belt and the Mao Ranges, meaning we have a balance of waters.

Honourable Speaker, we have underground water like the one discovered in Turkana that can sustain the whole country of Kenya for 50 years. We have 38 very big freshwater lakes and the longest lake and the deepest in the world, Lake Tanganyika, meaning it can carry very huge vessels. Honourable Speaker, we have very many rivers, including the Nile River, which is the longest in the world, as well as the Congo River, which have the seventh largest volumes of waters in the whole world.

Honourable Speaker, therefore, when we talk about blue economy, we are talking about blue economy, if we start with the lens of transport. Water transport is the cheapest and the safest form of transport. You can imagine if I can give an example of Lake Victoria. Here in Kampala, we are adjacent to Lake Victoria. Having a port in Lake Victoria, in Kampala, means that you can have transport and travel to several cities including Kisumu, Siaya, Homa Bay, Kampala, Jinja, Entebbe, Mwanza, Bukoba and Musoma without construction and maintenance of roads.

Honourable Speaker, the same with Lake Tanganyika. A port in Lake Tanganyika means you can do business and travel to Burundi, DRC, and Zambia without the necessity of constructing roads and maintaining the roads. In Lake Nyasa, that is Lake Malawi, you can do business with United Republic of Tanzania, Malawi, and Mozambique without the necessity of constructing and maintaining roads. The same with Indian Ocean, all the way from Mogadishu, Kismayo, Lamu, Malindi, Mombasa, Dar es Salaam is almost 3,500 kilometres of travel without having a road network. You know how difficult it is to construct a road, a highway, and to maintain that highway. We have not utilised such rivers.

Honourable Speaker, even River Nile from Jinja, you can travel all the way to Juba without necessarily constructing and maintaining roads. In terms of transport, it is a game-changer in the East African Economic Bloc. Honourable Speaker, if we use the lens of tourism, many countries, Switzerland for instance, attract more than 20 million tourists. One of the tourist attraction sites is a mud-made lake called Lake Geneva. We are blessed for ourselves that we do not need to make our lakes, they are naturally made by God, but we do not utilise it to attract tourists.

We utilise our lakes in washing our cars and watering our animals, which is a very progressive way of thinking. We need to utilise these lakes and rivers in tourist attraction. It is unfortunate that I have come to Kampala and I have not yet seen Lake Victoria. You can go to Kisumu and you

will be forgiven to stay there for a month and go without seeing Lake Victoria. The same with maybe Jinja you can see and also Entebbe.

Honourable Speaker, we must strategically make sure that our corridors, our transport corridors, the Central Corridor, the Northern Corridor, the LAPPSET, are all connected towards our water bodies so that these water bodies will also act as tourism attraction sites. If we use the lens of irrigation, we are blessed. These lakes apart from Lake Magadi and a few other lakes are freshwater lakes. They are good for irrigation.

Once you produce crops, you easily transport to five, ten countries using water transport, which is the cheapest and the safest. Lastly, if you view these water bodies that we are blessed with as East African Community in the lens of fishing, Honourable Speaker, you know that there are species of fish that are only found in Lake Victoria, not elsewhere in the world. We have we utilised those fish? We have not utilised the fish. We are not safeguarding those species of fish.

Honourable Speaker, it is unfortunate that our Committee on Accounts visited Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation (LVFO) and on the shores of Lake Victoria, on the shores of Lake Victoria, the fish that have travelled all the way from China using water transport to Mombasa and then again using lorries and buses and SGR from Mombasa to Jinja on the shores of Lake Victoria. The fish from China is cheaper than the fish from Lake Victoria where they use what we call in Kenya, Nduwano or a hook, just to hook and remove it. Once it is here, it is more expensive than the ones that have travelled 10,000 kilometres away. It is unfortunate, Honourable Speaker.

We have to change our game on how we utilise this fishing resource that God has blessed East Africa with. I suggest, and I think it was not captured in the motion, but if we can have, because we always have peace missions of our armies going to Somalia, and the DRC. We can also contribute two per cent of our armed forces, they are specialised, to make us jumpstart the blue economy in our region. Because in Kenya, we have used our Kenya Navy and KDF to construct, because they have engineers and specialists, to construct for us ferries like MV Uhuru so as to engage in water transport and safety.

I suggest that in the East African Community, each partner state can contribute 2 per cent of their armed forces, engineers and the Navy. They can assist us to find ways of utilising our water bodies; 38 freshwater lakes, abundant rivers and 6,500 kilometres of coastline in making sure that we benefit from the blue economy in terms of transport, in terms of fishing, in terms of irrigation and in terms of tourism.

Honourable Speaker, with those very many remarks, I beg to move. My seconder is Honourable Kennedy Kalonzo Musiyoka.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Sankok.

Honourable Members, the motion on the floor is that this Assembly do resolve to urge the Council of Ministers to enhance maritime transport and development of the blue economy by linking all lakes and rivers in the Community to the East African Community Transport Corridors.

The debate is open. We will start by your seconder.

11.22

Mr Kennedy Kalonzo (Kenya): Thank you, Right Honourable Speaker. Let me start by thanking the global geopolitician for this wonderful motion that I am fully in support of. I will be very brief.

The Speaker: Honourable Kennedy, today you are in order, as I can see. You have the floor.

Mr Kennedy Kalonzo (Kenya): Right Honourable Speaker and dear colleagues, I want to take us back to what President Museveni said. There were two key things he mentioned, which was wealth creation and being strategic. There is a Ugandan word he used. I will ask one of my colleagues to help me. The word is *Ekibaro*.

Right Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, there is a lot of wealth in East Africa. If we think of the example of the Nyakole cows, if you just have your cows in your village there, you are not going to create wealth creation. In fact, you will be poor. But here in the region we have all these lakes and all these water bodies that we can utilise so that our people are able to enjoy the dream of the EAC, part of which states that we are working towards a common market that means there shall be freedom of movement of goods, services, people and goods.

Right Honourable Speaker and Members, in supporting this motion and in line with that, I believe we will proceed in that way. We will create a lot of wealth for the region and I am sure our Summit members will be very happy. The geopolitician talked about tourism. I will not emphasise. I will just ask us to consider a few questions. I mean, many of us have always heard of Egypt and the River Nile and all the tourists that go to Egypt to be on the river. We have rivers that we can use for the same.

I do not know why we are importing fish. Yesterday I ordered a fish, which I struggled to eat. I know there is enough fish to feed the entire EAC region. We are not utilising our resources. Why can we not we export, for example, mkeke? As I stand here, unless you go to Burundi, for example, you will never eat that fish. It is unfortunate. We have all the tools to create wealth, to create food security, but we are simply just not utilising them.

Honourable Members, I urge you to support this motion. It is a brilliant motion. It is unfortunate, again, our frontbench are not here but we shall revisit. With those many remarks, I second and I support.

The Speaker: I had opened the debate. Honourable Members, we have ten members who want to debate. Clerk, I hope you have noted all the names. We have Honourable Blacks, Honourable Gideon, Honourable George, Honourable Gladness, Honourable Kakooza and others.

Honourable Musamali, are you back? You are welcome. It has been a long time.

The Members that I have mentioed so far will be followed by; Honourable Odongo, then Honourable Gideon, then Hon Woda, Honourable Musamali, then Kakooza then Doctors Aisha, and Saidi Kibeya and finally Honourable Dr Siranda.

Honourable Members, you have the Floor. Kindly be brief.

11.28

Mr George Odongo (Uganda): Thank you, Right Honourable Speaker. I am going to be very brief. If there is any of the resources of the Community that is very much underutilized, these are water resources. The blue economy of the EAC, if well-harnessed, has the capacity of financing the whole ESE budget. I am talking about the budgets of all the East African Community partner states. However, because it is not very well-utilized, we are struggling. I sometimes ask the question, what is wrong with us Africans? We are so much blessed with resources, and yet we are poor. Is it that we have a poor man's mentality? We have a poverty mentality.

Right Honourable Speaker, whereas I support this motion, there is a blue economy strategy of the EAC of 2021-2025. I think there is a need to interrogate that strategy, to look at the implementation of that strategy, and see where we have gone in the implementation of that strategy. Once we do the interrogation of that strategy, we should then be able to come out with sharper prayers. My concern with the motion is that it has three very broad prayers. It talks about promoting the linking and connecting all lakes and rivers in the Community to the EAC transport corridors, facilitating fast tracking the building, operating and maintaining of waggon vessels, engaging and involving the private sector investors in the provision of ports infrastructure, marine.

My view is that we need to look at the analysis of this strategy and do an evaluation of the implementation of the strategy. The Assembly has to come out with very specific recommendations to Council. These are very broad recommendations. I am sure that within the strategy there have been some areas that have been implemented. As you have said, we live here in this Community. There is a huge amount of opportunities that our blue economy provides that we have not. The least of it being actually, as you have said in the motion, linking, using the lake as a means of transport.

Once we invest in lake transport, we then reduce on the pressure on the roads. If you have a casual look at the road between Kampala and Jinja, you are going to see that there is a huge depression on the road. Because the bulk of the products that we are importing, say from Mombasa, coming through to Uganda, and going to Rwanda, to DRC, to South Sudan, you know, is causing a lot of pressure on the road infrastructure.

If we had water transport, then the goods would go through Kisumu, come over to Port Bell, or we can also, and if you have the Lake Tanganyika water also well developed, then you can have it linked to DRC, to Burundi, you know. It is a very important area that we should be looking into. In debating this motion, my proposal is that this Assembly interests itself in the EAC maritime economy strategy. We should interrogate it; do an evaluation, and come out with very specific recommendations that are actionable, that the Council can take over and implement. We need to have a strategy that actually works. I support the motion. I thank you so much.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable George. We have visitors in the gallery. We have 43 students from Cavendish University, Kampala, Uganda, who are accompanied by their lecturer.

They are from 13 different countries among them, two French speaking countries. I mean Gabon and DRC. The countries are Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, South Sudan, Somalia, South Africa, Uganda, Gabon, Sudan, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sierra Leone. They students study governance and politics. They have come to observe the proceedings. Thank you. Karibu. I hope it is good governance. Not bad governance. *(Applause)*

Thank you. Let us proceed.

11.34

Mr Gideon Thoar Gatpan (South Sudan): Thank you, Honourable Speaker. From the onset, let me say that I also did my Masters in Governance. I am grateful to have these important East Africans.

Right Honourable Speaker, let me start by congratulating the mover of the motion, Honourable David Ole Sankok. My brother, you have brought in a very, timely motion. I want to underscore that we as East African Community have underestimated our potential in terms of blue economy. Linking the maritime transport and development of the blue economy to other sectors of our economy is an important objective in our region. The mover has provided a methodology of how we can achieve this. It is an important objective in our region.

The Mover has provided a methodology of how we can do that by linking all the lakes and the rivers in the Community to the East African Transport Corridors. We visited Mwanza in 2022. My colleague, Ambassador Fatuma, knows about that. We realised that South Sudan would access goods from Dar es Salaam easily. If we have the standard gauge railway running up to the other side of Mwanza and goods would then be ferried by this big steamer being established on Mwanza side to the side of Lake Victoria on the Uganda side, South Sudan will collect the goods at a very close distance from Jinja.

Right, Honourable Speaker and Honourable Colleagues, this is a time in motion because we are underestimating the potentials in terms of tourism opportunities. Tourism comes with the employment and increase in our GDP as a region.

Secondly, developing our maritime economy and linking it to all the corridors is an important thing because we shall be facilitating our research. I know we have one vessel in Lake Victoria, which up to this time, I do not know how much it has served us as East Africans, but it is important to explore and to enhance maritime research. This is another important thing that we can facilitate by doing these linkages.

Right, Honourable Speaker, apart from research and tourism, the water sports and fishing, we need to develop water sports and we have to invest very much in our fishing economy. South Sudan, the country where I come from, is producing enormous fish, but who knows that apart from the South Sudanese? It is only the South Sudanese who are aware that we are producing enormous fish that we cannot utilize. We are not connected and we are not utilising the EAC corridors because these corridors are not yet linked and are not developed.

Honourable Speaker, the other component of promoting this linkage is in terms of promoting the motion by Honourable David ole Sankok is the transport of fish itself and other commodities. Let me say, for example, South Sudan is endowed with a network of rivers. These rivers, a long time ago, we used them to facilitate navigation, easy navigation and it is the cheapest transport. Now we are using flights, which are costly. We are using roads, which the maintenance is challenging. So if we develop and embrace the river transport or other means of transport using our waters, we shall be moving into a very good direction in terms of developing our economy.

Right, Honourable Speaker, I am almost winding up, enhancing maritime security is an important aspect of this motion. Having the linkages is going to promote enhancement of our maritime security, which is important. As it has been proposed by our colleague, Honourable David ole Sankok to scrutinize the East African maritime economy strategy so that we see into it that can we be able to develop a bill or can it be implemented the way it is reinforced by this motion.

Right, Honourable Speaker, I support the motion and I submit. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you. The next, Dr. Woda.

11.39

Dr Woda Jeremiah (South Sudan): Thank you very much, Right Honourable Speaker. On the onset, I want to thank Honourable David Ole Sankok for the timely motion.

I will be very brief because, as mentioned in his motion, if this motion is passed by the Assembly, we will have even reduction in the cost of transport. The Account Committee has been to Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency (CASSOA) and one of the major problems for the East African is the high prices of the ticket. Right, Honourable Speaker. If there is some competition from maritime, I think we will reduce the cost of the tickets. The other concern, which I want to draw the attention of the Honourable David ole Sankok to, is that the maritime or the blue economy is mostly for oceans. However, we know also that there is another definition for the blue economy, which include the fisheries and the products from the water bodies. We have the DRC and Somalia, which are part of the Community and will enhance this resource for us.

The other thing, as mentioned by Honourable Gideon, we in South Sudan, are endowed with richness of the River Nile and many lakes. South Sudan, is the only country where fish die of old age. Imagine an estimated 3,000 tonnes annually. If that was used by the Community, it would really enhance the economy of South Sudan and that of the region.

Honourable Sankok, I will add one concern, which is the enhancement of the severity of these maritime bodies. We visited the Lake Victoria Fisheries Commission. They told us that we lose approximately 5,000 East Africans annually. That number loses their life when they use the water bodies because we are not paying attention to the severity. That one should be added to the prayers. In the reports, we read that there are some missing people. You cannot be missing in the water. I think these missing people will be added to the death toll. Annually, more than 5,000 East Africans die in the waters. They should be added to the prayer. I support the motion.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Dr Woda. Next speaker is Hon Musamali. Try to be brief.

11.43

Mr Paul Mwasa Musamali (Uganda): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to air out my support for this important motion moved by my brother, the Honourable Dr. Ole Sankok.

Honourable Speaker, whatever I was going to say, has been said. One, we as East Africans and Africans, we are endowed with many resources but we have not utilised them very much. That is one of the reasons because of the abundance of resources, it could be the reason as to why we are underdeveloped, right, Honourable Speaker and members. When you have abundance, you even suffocate yourself from thinking. After eating and getting satisfied, what is next? Sleeping. Is that what we are doing, many of us? Yes, after eating, drinking, and then you sleep. What is next? We spend more of our time sleeping than thinking because of this abundance of resources.

Honourable Speaker, the development of the blue economy and our water bodies, we are already late. We would have done it yesterday. It is not too late. The best we can do now is to put our energies together such that we are able to develop these water bodies in terms of transport, security and sports. You cannot imagine that fish is dying of old age. As fish dies of old age in South Sudan, there are people who are malnourished in some parts of East Africa. It is because of the underdevelopment of this resource that we are unable to transport these resources from one area to another.

I want to end by urging the governments of East Africa. It is a high time we changed our ways of doing business. I want to refer to a wise saying from Cameroon. The Cameroonians say that in times of trouble, the chameleon must change from the behaviour of its ancestors, such that it is able to overcome trouble. You know how chameleons behave? They walk with a swagger. Yes, they walk slowly. Meaning that if chameleons continue walking the way they walk at the time of trouble, they will perish. That is what the Africans, particularly the people of East Africa should do. We should change our ways of doing business, such that we are able to move ahead. I support the motion

11.47

The Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Musamali. Who is a chameleon? Is he a Ugandan musician? I am an old man. I do not know him. I do not follow this music. *(Laughter)*

The next is Honourable Kakooza.

11.47

Mr James Kakooza (Uganda): Thank you, Right Honourable Speaker. I would like to support the motion. My contribution will be on the engaging and involving the private sector services investor in the provisions of ports, infrastructure, and maritime transport facilities within the

Community. When you follow what the President told us, that private sector creates wealth. Once it creates prosperity for people, they must be supported. When you look at the infrastructure, we do not have any facilities that can enable the business people to facilitate trade because we are lacking infrastructure. I can give an example. A boat, which carries people from, Zanzibar to Dar es Salaam, takes about one hour or one hour and 30 minutes. However, when you use a flight from Zanzibar to Dar es Salaam, you take almost two hours because of going through the airport. However, it costs almost \$8 million. In addition to that \$8 million, you add the tax.

The best way to go about this and facilitate trade within the common market using water, the council should come out vividly to say we are exempting anybody involved in manufacturing process of these boats. That is possible. It is very unfortunate that the Council of Ministers is not here because these are the initiatives. If we want to attract investors with money, those are the initiatives. Importing a boat to the lakes as a private sector, people have money. The taxes prohibit the provision of cheap transport.

As you know, that any businessman who's in trade, or any woman, as my sister has said, needs to transport goods and do business at a cheaper cost. There is nothing cheap, reducing the cost on transport, like water. Because moving from Mwanza to Port Bell, Uganda, using cheap transport is the easiest way every businessman could go for rather than using the road. It is a high time now for the Council of Ministers to pay much attention to the resource we have, exploit it better and utilise it more.

Tanzania has succeeded somehow, somewhere, because when you see the infrastructure the new one which they have put from Dodoma to Dar es Salaam, it is one of the cheapest. Even if I have goods from Dodoma to come to Dar es Salaam I use the cheapest means. The best way is the Council of Ministers now, when you want to achieve the pillar of the treaty in the common market, is to facilitate trade in the cheapest way possible that we can compete in the global trend of economies. The 2021 - 2025 strategies of economies, we need to think about those investors who could come. If the governments cannot manage, we should use public-private partnership. Other worlds have gone into that. Where government cannot provide a service, the private sector has come in and they have achieved. With those few remarks, I beg to support the motion. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Kakooza.

Next is Dr. Aisha.

11.51

Ms Aisha Nyiramana (Rwanda): Thank you, Honourable Chair, for giving me this opportunity to discuss the motion presented by Honourable Sankok.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, by raising here to support the motion by Honourable Sankok, I would like to focus on biodiversity conservation. We have a high pollution of our rivers and lakes. Secondly, we have to think about climate change on those rivers and lakes. So those lakes, they have been polluted by us, with discharging, all those discharging are put in our lakes. All those activities we are doing today are polluting our lakes as a consequence, we have diseases that we need to think

about. We have experienced disease in the East Africa such as Cholera, Dysentery and many others.

This motion on blue economy is very important because with this development, we develop also practices, which will help not pollute those rivers. This is very important because not having polluted lakes will help our health and enhance good trade inside our lakes. Our DGPs will also increase. Growing our economy is very important as we are talking about our local economies here in East Africa.

Having a healthy biodiversity in the lakes, will be the heritage of our Community where we can develop this tourism and have a high income which come from tourism. This blue economy is important to increase our economy and for biodiversity to improve our health. As Honourable Gideon has stated, while talking about maritime, we have to think about security. Here we are seeing in some articles where we have a high number of population, which is dying because of maritime transport. Those cases have happened in DRC. We have seen how without having a good maritime transport which has been as well organised, we have a high population which is dying. Security is important when we speak about maritime and blue economy; it will not only increase the economy of our local population, but also the security. I support the motion by Honourable Sankok. I submit.

The Speaker: Thank you, Dr. Aisha. Before we proceed, I would like to know whether Honourable Dr Woda has got her documents. Do you have it?

Dr Woda Jeremiah (South Sudan): Yes, I have it.

The Speaker: After this motion, we will proceed with your private member's bill.

The next is Dr Saidi Kibeya.

11.55

Dr Saidi Kibeya (Burundi): Thank you, Right Honourable Speaker. I stand to support the motion by Honourable David ole Sankok on this important matter, as transport efficiency and cost reduction by using water body means of transport. Recognising that many years ago, for hinterlands of this region to be connected to the east coast of Burundi, to the ocean, for example Zanzibar, those Arabs who came to Bujumbura, to DRC, Burundi, they used Lake Tanganyika for sailing, for reaching those aspects.

It is after independence that we concentrated on road transport thus increasing over 40 per cent of the cost of transport. However, there is a lot of efforts made by our partner states in increasing the capacity of transport by railway; standard gauge railway from Kenya to reach Uganda and further Rwanda and DRC. Electric standard gauge transport by railway in Tanzania to reach Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and then DRC. However, this document is silent about that. We may need to recognise this fact by putting another paragraph in the preamble. That is my proposal to adopt it with an amendment so we can recognise this effort so that our partner state will make better use

of railway and water bodies to increase the capacity of transport linking our regions. That is my proposal.

Right Honourable Speaker, I thank you and I support the motion.

The Speaker: Thank you for being brief. Next is Honourable Siranda Blacks.

Siranda Blacks, Gerald Lucas.

Dr Gerald Siranda Blacks (Uganda): Christian.

The Speaker: Christian.

11.58

Dr Gerald Siranda Blacks (Uganda): Right Honourable Speaker, I would like to begin by supporting the motion by the Honourable David Ole Sankok because it is a timely motion.

Right Honourable Speaker, as you may be aware, East Africa is going to be hosting the African Cup of Nations in 2027, the Pamoja Bid. However, before that, Right Honourable Speaker, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania have been given an opportunity to host the CHAN; the championship cup that is played by players that are in the domestic league.

Right Honourable Speaker, this motion is timely because the East Africans are going to be in a position to showcase the potential that we have. However, if we do not develop initiatives like this, the cost of transport, people have talked about it, is very expensive and therefore is going to limit many people from visiting the region.

Right Honourable Speaker, from Kampala to an island called Kalangala, it takes you one hour on the water. However, if you go by road through Masaka and then Bukakata, you will use about three or four hours. The development of the multi means of transport is going to ease the transport and also in terms of timing and cost because time is money.

Right Honourable Speaker, the blue economy is very important because God assigned this region and assigned us the question of blue economy. First, it is going to mitigate on the issues of climate change because once you are constructing and maybe focus on the road transportation, you know there are a lot of issues in terms of dealing with the climate. If we develop the multi economy and the transport within there, we're going to mitigate the impact on climate change. It is important, that we develop this aspect for us to have an inclusive access of our people that are within the waters, the islands, and then the coastal states or coastal region.

Right Honourable Speaker. The multi of blue economy is not just about fish now. In Uganda, we now have sand mining, a very important aspect that now people are coming from China and everywhere in whatever region and continents to do mining of sand in the lakes. Once we have the regulations and a motion with the proper regulations and laws, we will have a uniformity in terms

of how we manage, but also protection of our wealth so that our generation and our future children, will find us with initiatives to protect the resources and our wealth that are within this multi aspect.

Right Honourable Speaker, the question of our people dying is because our governments of East Africans have left our people on their own. We do not have proper regulation on what kind of vessels are on the waters. In Uganda, we lost over 20 people on a vessel recently because we have left this to private investors. If I have resources, I just get my vessel and put it on the water without clear regulations on which kind of vessel goes to the waters. This kind of a motion will help the East Africans and all our partner states to develop a clear strategy in terms of protecting the people, then we will reduce the question of accidents that happen with the water.

Right Honourable Speaker, this motion will also allow governments to develop a clear strategy in terms of looking at this as an economy so that we bring the money as an alternative way of mobilising for resources that come from this region. Right Honourable Speaker, I do not want to say many things, but I am here, to support this timely motion, but also to align it with our strategy on a blue economy, just like the Honourable George Odongo said. I beg to submit and second the motion.

The Speaker: Thank you.

The next Members to contribute will be; Honourable Bahati, then Honourable Zipporah, then Honourable Dr. Gladness, Honourable Namara and finally Honourable Mary. Please be brief, we still have a number of pending orders.

12.04

Mr Alex Bahati (Rwanda): Thank you, Right Honourable Speaker. I thank my friend for the motion. I also thank for those who have contributed before me. I think the issue has been exhaustively debated. I am here to emphasise on some issues. If I am to borrow some words that were used, it is beyond reason that maritime transport is needed. We need to use it. We go out of standards of our future East African. People are not benefiting from the fishing. I want to insist on some issues. It is estimated that 5,000 people die in these waters due to bad regulatory mechanisms of which the canals. They move on, the waters; no specifications needed, no restrictions, people can be communicated, poor communications there, so I think, as per the recommendations, we have to think and see how this, the sensitivity of these people can be really, be protected. You cannot imagine having 5,000 people dying in Lake Victoria alone, and what about other bodies? so that I take caution, the word of recent coordination in the DRC, meaning that it is something that we have to, with a strong recommendation about the sensitivity of these people.

Secondly, as the Honourable Sankok said, there should be a mechanism for using our own forces, be it what it be, the East African Stand-By Brigade, they could bring our navies, such that we can be there to protect, just in case of emergency, can we be having the East African Stand-By Brigade, or anybody can help. We would not have had this crisis in Lake Victoria. Another point is about the environment, the environment is that Lake Victoria, when we were at the LVBC, we were told that within 50 years to come or 42 years remaining, if the issue of pollution, that is the environment

protection, Lake Victoria will not be there anymore. When we talk of maritime transport, if the environment is not well protected, within 43 years to come, we shall just put in there, instead we will forget about the waters.

Mr Speaker, with those few remarks, I support the motion.

The Speaker: Thank you Honourable Bahati. Now I give the floor to Honourable Zipporah.

12.08

Ms Zipporah Kering (Kenya): Right Honourable Speaker, thank you so much for the opportunity. From the onset, I support this motion that has also been supported by the colleagues who spoke before me.

Right Honourable Speaker, this is one motion that needs implementation as early as yesterday. It is unfortunate, that as we are speaking to this motion, and we are talking of urging the Council of Ministers, who are absent here, I wish there would even be one listening to this motion,

Right Honourable Speaker, this House has worked so hard for Honourable Sankok to come up with such a motion, a timely motion, an exciting motion, a motion that will give this House a legacy, a motion that will give the Fifth EALA Parliament a legacy. Joining the maritime within our partner states will really be something very exciting.

Right Honourable Speaker, we might feel like we are repeating what the other members have spoken about, but for real, this motion will bring this Community together. When Mzee Museveni, the President of the Republic of Uganda, spoke to us, he talked of *Ndugu*. He talked of security where we can have the army, one army, one market, and brings us closer together. I believe such a motion, when implemented, will actually deepen the integration we have been talking about. It will deepen, it will widen, and it will tighten integration.

Right Honourable Speaker, like we have always said, even the traffic jams, you know, you walk along the road for many hours, you get tired, but I want to believe riding or travelling in the water would actually ease a lot of stress for the people using it.

Right Honourable Speaker, I just want to say I support this motion. My only worry is that we are speaking to something that the people who have the onus to implement are not around with us. We believe this particular motion is good. We will insist and push until it is implemented.

Thank you so much. I support the motion.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Zipporah. We give the floor to Dr. Gladness.

12.11

Dr Gladness Salema (Tanzania): Thank you so much, Honourable Speaker. My brother, Honourable Sankok, this is an interesting motion. I have a few issues that I think it is very important for the members of the Assembly, to have a look at as we propose this motion. One of the things that I think is very important to understand is that the marine sector, this is part of the

different transportation models, which we have. This motion is not binded just to the blue economy.

The multiplier effects, yes, we go to the blue economy, but I think it is beyond the blue economy. If we want to look on the blue economy, let it stand on its own, but at this time, I think the interest is on the maritime industry or sector. I would wish that they are being separated, and if we want to show the multiplier effects, then we should be able to establish even the different sectors which will actually benefit from this important transformation that we are looking for.

Another thing that I think is also very important, looking on, this is on page three, what we actually kind of propose to the Council of Ministers, I look at them and I see small strategies. I just had one question. These strategies, what do we want to achieve out of them? What is the vision of the Assembly as far as the maritime sector? What is the vision of the Assembly? What vision do we have? Sometimes, it is dangerous just to come up with proposed strategies, and if I look at them, somehow, if you meet the Minister, they will tell, already they are implementing, you know, like linking, connecting, you know, that there are certain efforts that are already there. So I had the question; what is the vision? What do we aspire?

If we reflect to the EAC vision 2050, what do we aspire as far as the maritime sector is concerned? It is very important that this motion at least present a broader, you know, like envision or aspire, the aspiration, broader aspirations that we think the Ministers of, the Council of Ministers, they have to look at them. Even if we have these three kinds of proposed strategies, they can also have, develop more of the strategies. Sometimes we are safer on giving the outcomes of what we expect than recommending or proposing for strategies. I had that question on what could be the outcomes that we are looking for. In addition, I had, this is just a question, and maybe because I am new here, but I just had an assumption that maybe the members of the Assembly, understand well the sector. We understand its capacity. We understand the gaps. What do we have? What is it that we are missing as far as the capacity is concerned? This should reflect the logistics industry. As of now, globally, people compete to for integrated logistics systems. Maritime is part of that. So what capacity do we have? What gaps do we have? If we say linkages, what exactly do we want to link with? I have these questions. I thought that the members understand better. Justification is important. We should bring it out clearly and even show the capacity as far as the governance and institutional frameworks is concerned and see what gaps we have. If we propose, we address it in a very holistic manner.

Right Honourable Speaker, I support the motion, but with such amendments. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you. I will not give the Floor to Honourable Namara followed by Honourable Amongin.

12.16

Mr Dennis Namara (Uganda): Thank you very much, Right Honourable Speaker. On the onset, I would want to say I support the motion by Honourable Dr. Sankok because all the motions we bring must be able to reflect the pillars of integration. The motion by the Honourable Sankok

clearly reflects on the two pillars of integration. That is the Common Market Protocol and the Customs Union.

Right Honourable Speaker, His Excellency the President when we were in Kenya, Nairobi on that day when he talked about to the Honourable Baba Owino. He talked about why foreigners and the donors do not fund projects that lower the cost of doing business. However, they fund projects like conferences. How do you talk about sustainable development of East Africa and you are funding conferences? The stimuli or the stimulus to socioeconomic transformation one is about the cost of doing business. We know very well that using the railways and water is one of the ways of how we can lower the cost of doing business.

The motion of Honourable Sankok talks about interlinking the different water bodies, rivers and lakes to the transport corridor. Which means we are looking for a solution on supporting the two pillars of integration, the movement of goods and services across East Africa. If you are to move a product from Tanzania for example, by road through Namanga or the other borders, how much would it cost you vis-a-vis someone moving the product from Mwanza by water up to Port Bell?

Secondly, the issue of electricity. We must protect our water bodies and be able to encourage a lot of investors to come and invest in the area of electricity generation so that we can be able to lower the unit costs of power, a kilowatt of electricity to facilitate more electricity generation thereby lowering the cost of the kilowatt of electricity to lower the cost of production and industrialisation in East Africa. We must therefore develop a deliberate policy to protect our water bodies. There is too much silting on our lakes. For example, Lake Victoria. Honourable Dr Siranda talked about to sand mining which is a big challenge in Uganda. We have Chinese who are almost mining sand and therefore they are mining a lot of sand and causing silting in Lake Victoria. It is a big challenge. I wish the Council of Ministers was here though they are not here. You can see the front bench now has been invaded by the backbenchers because those who are supposed to be here are not here, including myself. Rather than a speaker, I therefore support the motion as moved by the Honourable Sankok.

I also urge the Council of Ministers to be able to come up with a deliberate policy on how we can not only protect our water bodies, but also encourage investors to come and invest on our water bodies. I beg to submit, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you. Now, Honourable Mary. Please proceed.

12.19

Ms Mary Mugenyi (Uganda): Thank you so much, Right Honourable Speaker, for allowing me to speak at this last minute. I stand to support Honourable Sankok, who has brought this motion. This motion is vital and very timely. He talked about the mindset of Africans. I think we need to attack our mindset, the mindset of our people. When I see people begging on the street the whole day, I wonder; able-bodied person, and sometimes carrying a child.

In this country, where most people, if not all, can access some land, water body, or whatever it is, you stand in the sunshine the whole day, under the sun collecting dust and fumes when you could

be in your village where you are likely to access a resource like water that we are talking about today to survive. When we talk about investment, we actually are referring mainly to outsiders. However, we can be the investors on our own water. A lot has been said about the transport. Remember, I want to remind everyone, we are located in the Great Lakes region. This is the Great Lakes.

The world knows us as the Great Lakes region. How more can we be endowed than that? So, let us take advantage of what God has given us. It is essential for transport of people and goods. That has been well said. We just need to make it safe. It is essential for sporting, swimming, surfing, scuba diving, whatever the sports that we see around the world. It should be on our lakes and rivers here. However, is it there? Some of it is even indigenous. We grew up to find people swimming on rivers. It is not like we are learning it from abroad. We just need to polish it and make it more safe. Then water is good for tourism. That is very clear and it has been said. When you speak last, of course you say what others have said. I just want to emphasize that. The tourism industry, people in the Great Lakes region, we should be the biggest earners from our own water bodies.

Water is good for pleasure. We live around these resources and we do not enjoy them. Then you have outsiders coming to invest and being on our water and we are just looking at them. It is actually soothing. Let me repeat this. Water is soothing. It is therapeutic. If we can learn to utilise what we have, we would actually know that by being near the water, even by listening to the sound of waves in a big lake like Victoria, or even the sound of flowing water in rivers, it is soothing. There is something therapeutic that it does to you. Colleagues, let us support this motion and get our resource to be used very well. Then the manufacturing industry, talking about the maritime industry.

You have manufacturing of boats, canoes and other water vessels that is a big economy. Then you have the service industry, the restaurants, the hotels, that should be able, the beaches. I am glad to report that I had someone saying, actually, it is the owner, he said, since I came, I have not been to Lake Victoria.

Let us create time and go to the shores of Lake Victoria, which is not even 10 kilometres from here. You will realise that we now have beach after beach after beach. I am glad about that. We are waking up, and we need to polish it up, support it, as a regional administration, the EAC, support our governments, and demand that investment in our water bodies is taken as a priority.

I stand to support you, and thank you, Honourable Sankok, for this timely motion.

I submit Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you. Proceed, Honourable Amongin.

12.25

Ms Jacqueline Amongin (Uganda): Thank you so much right Honourable Speaker. I commend and support Honourable Sankok for this timely motion to this august House. The EAC is one of

the regional economic blocs under the African Union. Being one of the regional economic blocs within the region this motion is very timely. It is coming at a time when the African Union has come up with a strategy of blue economy. It is also coming at a time when member states within the African Union are adopting an idea of continental free trade area. Therefore, maritime transport within the EAC is strategic. This will not only boost our tourism potential and make it easier for us to move as the people within the region do trade within the region. It will also ease the transport.

Let me give an example. When you are in Europe, you can cross to so many other countries easily. For us in EAC this would have been very strategic for us because you could connect to any of the countries easily if we embarked on strengthening our maritime transport. I would have also loved Honourable Sankok to make it stronger in his prayer that as the EAC region despite the fact that every year we do thematic the themes in regards to protecting our natural resources. For example last year the theme was on climate change and environmental protection. However, there is totally no clear strategy despite the fact that we already have the policy in place within the EAC on this direction. There is no clear strategy. This motion is timely in terms of calling upon the ministers of the EAC to expedite the process of even coming up with a strategy of the East African Community on climate change and blue economy.

Right Honourable Speaker I know members have already talked a lot in regards to this topic. However, I want to emphasise the fact that when this motion is adopted and the ministers it will bring the attention of government to reduce on the death toll within the water bodies. As you realise most of the private sectors are the ones running businesses within the water bodies and the checks and balances sometimes are limite. People are dying in different ways in the water bodies. This will help government within the region to harmonise transports and also harmonise and coordinate the private sector.

Right Honourable Speaker as per the IUCN report, 76 per cent of the fish species are facing extinction especially on our Lake Victoria due to so many challenges affecting the water bodies including our activities like throwing polythene bags in water bodies. We are disposing pharmaceuticals in the water bodies and definitely, this is very threatening for the region especially in the fishing sector.

Yesterday, we were talking about we talked about merging Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation and Lake Victoria Basin Commission. The initiative is aimed at harmonising the maritime transport is very strategic in addressing the key challenges that our water bodies are facing including increasing temperatures affecting our aquatic life and the increasing amount of silt to the water due to the water quality flowing into the lake.

Right Honourable Speaker this particular motion will not only address an issue in regards to maritime transport. It will also address so many issues related including bringing the attention of governments to ensuring that the water is protected for fishing and the quality of the fish that we get as a region. It is also aimed at addressing climate related issues and challenges within the water but most importantly addressing our forefathers visions of free movement of goods and services made easier within the region through the maritime transport.

Right Honourable Speaker as the last speaker on this motion, I commend Honourable Dr. Sankok for bringing this timely motion. My hope is that the Honourable Ministers even when they are not here right now they are able to read this extract this from the HANSARD and ensure that this is prioritised in their day-to-day modus operandi.

Right Honourable Speaker, I beg to submit.

The Speaker: Thank you Honourable Amongin.

I will now I now give the mover of the motion time to respond. Please be brief because everyone supports you.

Mr David ole Sankok (Kenya): Thank you very much Honourable Speaker. As you can see, I am in blue for the blue economy with the flag of East African for patriotism and pan-Africanism well informed by our EAC Father figure, His Excellency General Yoweri Kaguta Museveni.

Honourable Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for giving me this opportunity and to thank Mr Dennis Kibirige who was our drafter. We have heard from members and I thank all of them because they have supported especially there is the need for us to be the net fish exporters not importers. Aware of the 300,000 tonnes of fish in the Republic of South Sudan some of them dying of old age yet even the Republic of South Sudan there are people suffering from Kwashiorkor; lack of protein.

Honourable Speaker we have also heard about the need to connect especially from Dr. Gladness, who is a lecturer. She used many English words but I tried to understand. In her English she said we should be very specific surely connecting for instance our northern corridor central corridor to River Congo it means we reduce the construction of 4,700 kilometres of road we will use that water transport all the way to Atlantic Ocean.

Honourable Speaker if Republic of South Sudan decides to pick their goods from Mwanza or Kisumu through Jinja River Nile they will reduce 3,900 kilometres to Juba so they will arrive safely and faster. The issue of sports swimming has been spoken. I went to Copacabana Beach in Brazil which attracts more than 50 million tourists annually to swim in the oceans. They are salty you only swim for a few hours but when I swam in Lake Turkana because it also have sand beaches it is a freshwater lake I swim while I drink the water. It is very refreshing.

I also accept amendment from colleagues; amendment from Honourable Dr. Woda Jeremiah on the issue of safety. We should include safety and once we invest on this especially when we have our army taking care. We would have safety and would use those vessels being safe enough. Honourable Dr. Aisha also talked of water pollution and plastic. I think we should include on this one, and the amendments are well accepted.

Honourable speaker, without much ado, allow me to thank all the members because almost the whole House supported my motion, starting from my able seconder, Honourable Kennedy Kalonzo Musyoka, Jr; Honourable George Odongo, the EAC, Mobile encyclopedia; Honourable Gideon

Gatpa; Honourable Dr. Woda Jeremiah; Honourable Musamali, Chuma ya zamani. Honourable Dr. Aisha; Honourable Engineer Saidi Kibera; Honourable Dr. Siranda Blacks Lucas-Gerald; Honourable Bahati Alex, he belongs to my club of disability, and you guys do not join to our club. We want to enjoy the benefits alone; Honourable Dr. Aisha, I have to thank you two times, Queen of the Global South. Honourable Zipporah Kering; Honourable Dr. Gladness. Honourable Francine Rutazana, the Queen of Sports; Honourable Mary Mugenyi. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: You have one queen, others are not queens.

Mr David ole Sankok (Kenya): All of them are queens. Here we have the Queen of Sheba, the Queen of the Global North, the Smiling Queen and the Sub-Saharan Queen.

Honourable Speaker, I also have to thank Honourable Namara for supporting me, you have a direct ticket; I have to thank Honourable Jacqueline Amongin. *(Applause)* I do not know if I have forgotten anybody. Mary Mugenyi I have mentioned her. Is there anybody else? My mother-in-law, you did not contribute. *(Laughter)* Thank you very much Honourable Speaker and with those very many remarks, I also thank you. You have been sitting there for long. Speaker, we have to discuss, for now you maintain sitting on that seat. Some of us keep on moving out and coming in. Honourable Speaker, thank you so much.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you Honourable Sankok. Now I put the question that this House urged the Council of Ministers to enhance maritime transport and development of the blue economy by linking all lakes and rivers in the Community to the East African Community Transport Corridors.

(Question put and agreed to)

(Motion adopted – Leave granted)

Ms Jacqueline Amongin (Uganda): Procedure, Right, Honourable Speaker. I know everyone is wondering why I am wasting time, but it is not time wastage. We are in the House. The procedural issue I am raising is in regards to the frustrations that members get on the Floor, especially when it comes to presenting items where members need support.

For example, Honourable Speaker, I will quote for you our Rules of Procedure, Rule 64. If I am a member and I am bringing a private member's bill to this House, I should be accorded all the necessary support in regards to me being able to deliver this particular bill to this House, especially by our legal or legislative staff.

Therefore, Honourable Speaker, I'm raising on a procedural matter that in the future it is important that the staff members who support us in doing our duties well in this House are more organised in terms of the order paper and the agenda that is brought to this House, because it causes frustration. The other prayer that I would like to bring, especially our dear commissioners who are sitting in this House, I think it is a high time, even if it meant only reviewing one rule in these

Rules of Procedure, so that this House, this Fifth Assembly, can go paperless. The argument that we are having with the staff in regards to the bill of Honourable Dr Woda was that the printing was taking so long. As a House, if we resolve that we go paperless, that would solve the issue of us waiting for papers, and these members have access to iPads, and therefore would not be relying on printouts. We are going digital. We are moving from analogue. We are now going digital.

We could propose that this Parliament goes digital, all submissions be sent to our iPads, just like Uganda's Parliament does, and then there would be no issues of delaying members' business, because sometimes it really frustrates somebody. In addition, when I heard from the staff, their argument was also genuine. That is an issue that we might have to look at, Right Honourable Speaker, so that our work as members of Parliament is not derailed or frustrated. We need to conduct business.

Right Honourable Speaker, I beg to move. Thank you so much.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Dr Amongin. It is indeed frustrating. You know, Honourable Dr. Woda has been here from 9.00 a.m. in the morning, and she went to check, and the clerks told her that everything was Okay. However, the bill she was given, she was given a wrong one. She was given the Francine one. This is difficult to understand. The clerks who are here should commit to ensure that does not happen again. It has been happening repeatedly. Our Clerk of EALA is in Arusha, but please report to him. Clerks, try to be professionals.

Let us proceed to the Motion by Dr Woda.

MOTION SEEKING LEAVE OF THE ASSEMBLY TO INTRODUCE A PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL

12.43

Dr Woda Jeremiah (South Sudan): Thank you very much, Right Honourable Speaker. I don't know, am I starting from the beginning, or just to justify because I had already read the motion?

The Speaker: Justify because you had moved the motion.

Dr Woda Jeremiah (South Sudan): Thank you very much, Right Honourable Speaker. I do not want to repeat what has been said by my good honourable colleague, Honourable Jackie Amongin. I am frustrated because, as you mentioned, Honourable Speaker, I was here from 9.00 o'clock. I asked for the motion and the draft bill, which was sent a couple of days ago, and it was sent through the emails. However, I asked them to print, which is not my work, because I did not want to distract the House. Yet, it happened once again. I do not want to take it personally, but I think this is inefficiency, and it has to be corrected.

Right Honourable Speaker, the region of EAC is endowed with a very large population of livestock. The countries like Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, South Sudan, and Somalia have a large population of livestock. Let me mention where I come from; South Sudan alone, it stands at a population of the cattle in South Sudan is 12 million, the goats are 20 million, and sheep 25 million, plus other livestock which are not counted for.

Right Honourable Speaker, the livestock resources make significant economic contribution to the region, and this is estimated between 30 and 50 per cent of the agricultural GDP. When it comes to the national GDP, it can reach to 10 and 15 per cent GDP, which is the gross domestic production. There is a big potential of livestock contribution to exceed 50 to 60 percent of the agricultural GDP, but this will depend on adequate budget allocation in addition to improve health and nutrition of this livestock.

Right Honourable Speaker, history shows that this region, the EAC partner states, were exporting livestock to Europe, Middle East, and Asia at independence and after. However, this has stopped. Until 2007, the region was exporting beef to Europe, but it lost its quota to Botswana. This was due to the outbreak of the Rift Valley Disease and Pest Dipartite Ruminant, which is a disease for the small ruminant, and failure to timely detect, prevent, and control these diseases by the region. One of the major reasons which limit this rich region's potential to export livestock or livestock products to the region or external market is inability to meet the required sanitary standard due to the rampant transboundary animal diseases and zoonotic diseases.

Right Honourable Speaker, the zoonotic diseases are diseases which we as humans are prone to. They are diseases which the human can infect animals and animals can also infect humans. Examples are Avian Flu, Tuberculosis, Brucellosis, Corona virus, Monkey pox, which is a problem these days, Tick-Borne Disease like Marburg, Haemorrhages, Chickenpox, Mad Cow Disease, among others.

Right Honourable Speaker, as this community celebrating 25 years of existence, it's the right time for this important sector, which is the livestock sector, to have this important bill, Right Honourable Speaker. You just visited the farm of the Honourable Mary Mugenyi, and I wish I was among the people who visited that farm. From the photos that were shared, I saw that she has very healthy and beautiful cattle and livestock. I am one of the people who really admire livestock, and especially cattle, goats, and productive livestock. Our people in South Sudan, they sing to their cattle and they name them by names. We got the privilege to visit one of our own Maasai pastoralists, the farm of Honourable Sankok, Indeed, the success of these farms and livestock depend on keeping them healthy and also managing them properly and giving them the proper nutrition.

One of the biggest worries and nightmares, of livestock keepers is the outbreak of disease. When there is an outbreak of disease, which is not prevented and controlled, this means that there will be a great loss. This country where we are hosted, Uganda, has suffered from the foot and mouth disease this year. This is a disease, which infects the big and small ruminants, but I thank the government of Uganda because they were able manage and control it. They quarantined the animals from those provinces, which were infected, and they prohibited the consumption of the meat and milk products from these animals. I wish we had a joint approach of the EAC to control this outbreak.

Right Honourable Speaker, birds, animals and wildlife, do not have passports. They move and can spread diseases. As we are also preparing tomorrow to go and visit the Kisuze farm on the invitation, which was given to us by His Excellency, the President of Uganda, Museveni, I think

we will really go and see something beautiful there also. I know that if this bill sees the light, one or two presidents, one of them is the president of this country because he is somebody who loves livestock, and also my own president who is the head of the Summit because he is a livestock keeper.

Right Honourable Speaker, I beg this house to support this bill because it is timely. This bill is a product of livestock bill, which has been like downstream to be in form of this transboundary animal and zoonotic diseases, and this was a collective resolution from the committee from Fourth EALA.

I beg the members of this house to let this bill see the light so that the East Africa go back to be one of the best producers of the livestock and livestock product in the region and outside the region. I beg to move, Right Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Dr. Woda.

Dr Woda Jeremiah (South Sudan): The seconder is Honourable Ambassador Fatuma.

The Speaker: I propose the question that the motion on the floor is that this assembly do grant leave to Honourable Dr Woda to introduce a private member's bill entitled the East African Community Prevention and Control of Transboundary Animal and Zoonotic Diseases Bill 2024. The debate is open and I give the Floor to the Seconder.

Mr Mashaka Ngole (Tanzania): Mr Speaker, I have a motion under Rule 11 of the Rules of Procedure.

Mr. Speaker, I stand under the provisions of Rule 11 of the rules which provide that the sittings shall, unless the Assembly otherwise resolves, ordinarily commence at 9:00 a.m. in the morning up to 1:00 p.m. in the afternoon and resume at 2:30 p.m. in the afternoon and conclude at 6:30p.m.

Mr Speaker, upon looking at my watch. I have noticed that 1.00 p.m. is approaching and I am sure we cannot complete. I move for a resolution that this Assembly extends time to give the seconder time to finish.

The Speaker: Only the seconders? We still have another motion.

12.53

Dr Makame Abdulla (Tanzania): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. We have an important motion on the Floor and other business to complete. However, yesterday, your office, communicated that we have other businesses planned jointly by the East African Legislative Assembly and the Parliament of Uganda which is set to commence at 1.00 p.m.

Mr Speaker, ordinarily, as the rules of procedure provide, that the motion which is on the Floor can proceed in the next sitting of the Assembly because naturally, we cannot do justice to the motions which are scheduled for today. I beg to move.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, thank you.

The Speaker: Do you have seconders? (*Loud Consultations*)

Honourable members, let us finish the business, but do you have a seconder? You have one seconder; Dr Maghembe.

I will now give the Floor to Mr Paul Mwasu Musamali.

12.54

Mr Paul Mwasu Musamali (Uganda): I am raising on a procedural point here, Honourable Speaker. There was a motion, which was moved by Honourable Mashaka Ngole. Before, the matter which was raised by the Honourable Dr Makame.

I thought we would dispose of the motion of Honourable Mashaka, such that, and basing on some of the submissions which have already been made here, though not on record, since we are only granting Honourable Dr. Woda leave, we do not expect a lot of debate. We should allow Honourable Mashaka's motion, such that we dispose of this debate.

12.55

Mr James Kakooza (Uganda): Procedure right, Honourable Speaker.

You know, sometimes when we are doing things, we should not be emotional. Honourable Woda, it was a motion, and the motion of leave was to be justified by Honourable Ndagiza. The Chairperson of the Committee on Legal, Rules and Privileges cited a rule.

He stood up for a procedure but not a motion.

Mr Speaker, you could have offloaded the justification of Honourable Ndagiza as you had ruled. Because the HANSARD will be shabby. Somebody recording would not follow. The motion was already substantive. The seconder had not submitted then somebody came in with a procedure. Now there is another motion. How will the HANSARD look like? The records must be put straight.

I do believe that the best way to go forward, the person who is seeking leave because it was a motion, you cannot bring a motion to another motion. It cannot happen. Unless the ruling you have made that Honourable Ndagiza should second and you offload the motion of Honourable Dr. Woda, should happen first and then another motion can come.

The Speaker: Honourable Members, we are confusing ourselves a lot. The Chair of Legal proposed to extend time so that we could finish with Dr. Woda's motion. Dr Makame came to support and give clarification that we could not support what was proposed by the Chair.

Honourable Members, I give the floor to the seconder, and then I will put the question. (*Loud Consultations*)

Mr Gideon Gatpan (South Sudan): Right Honourable Speaker, I think it is right to dispense the motion by Honourable Mashaka Ngole because of time. Let us pass the motion. He has already moved and it was seconded. The Speaker needs to put the question so that we protect ourselves from time. Thank you.

The Speaker: You are right. Honourable Members, I put the question to Honourable Mashaka Ngole's motion to extend the time; those in favour say "Aye" and those who are against, say "Nay".

(Question put and agreed to)

12.58

Amb Fatuma Ndagiza (Rwanda): Thank you, Right Honourable Speaker. We have wasted a lot of time on the motion that was introduced by Honourable Dr. Woda to seek leave. It will be just right for members to support this motion and grant her leave. Because of the frustration she has gone through from morning. As her seconder, I have also experienced the frustration from 9.00 a.m. in the morning.

That was on a light note, but seriously, this is an important motion. A motion seeking leave of the Assembly to introduce a bill to provide for prevention and control of transboundary animal and zoonotic diseases within the Community.

Right Honourable Speaker, I support the motion because this bill is timely. I want to take you briefly through the history of this bill. Honourable Dr. Woda started developing a bill on livestock as far back as the Fourth EALA. Livestock is a key sector in our Community. It is one of the 17 sectors of cooperation. It also impinges on common market protocol and customs union.

We do trade across the borders, but it also contributes to livelihoods of our people. During the public hearing, some partner states felt that the scope of the bill was so broad. They advised that we narrow it, she narrows it, to focus on the transboundary zoonotic diseases. It is a challenge. And therefore, after that, we also had some discussion within the Committee of Agriculture. We even invited, during the Fifth EALA. I remember in Moshi, we invited experts from all our seven partner states. They all attended and were all in support of this bill and thought it was a timely bill. That would also enhance the already existing frameworks such as livestock policy and also a strategy on prevention and control of transboundary animal and zoonotic diseases.

Honourable members, you are aware that frameworks like policies and strategies are important. However, when it comes to enforcement, we need a bill. This is the rationale of having this bill. I am happy that we are debating this. After listening to the address of our leader, His Excellency, President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, eloquently when he was talking about the first mission of prosperity and wealth creation, but also the importance of markets. You remember the way he brought in the example of Ugandan experience of his tribe, Banyankole, the cows, the surplus in

milk and meat, and the need to export. We are also aware as a region, and in line with our vision, of having a united, integrated, secure, and prosperous Community; we need to do trade in a way that the health of our people is not undermined.

Public health is critical when you talk about transboundary diseases. As it has already been explained by Honourable Dr. Woda, these transboundary animal diseases are highly contagious. They can affect, animals can affect human beings, and human beings can affect animals. I will give you a small example. There is a time that the Committee on Agriculture undertook an oversight on the impact of COVID-19 on tourism. We went to all our partner states, and some of us in Rwanda decided to visit the office that is in charge of an important tourist attraction, the Mountain Gorilla, in the northern part of Rwanda. We share this endangered species with DRC and also Uganda. They migrate anytime they want, sometimes they can move from Uganda, come to Rwanda, or move from Rwanda to the DRC. Countries have of course agreed on how they share the benefits.

One finding was that the tourists who are visiting, before they could be allowed to go and visit the mountain gorillas, they needed to take a COVID test, because they would contaminate the animals. We were surprised, but this resonates with the importance of transboundary diseases. We are doing business in our community, cross-border. People can take animals across the border, it could be cattle, goats, sheep, poultry, but we need to do it in a secure manner, in a way that these animals are free from diseases. The more we do business better, this will contribute to our intra-EAC trade, but it will also contribute to the exports of livestock we send in international markets, in terms of standards, and therefore this is what the bill is calling for. We need to have a bill that will help in prevention and control of transboundary animal and zoonotic diseases.

We all know that agriculture and livestock is the backbone of the region. About 80 per cent of our people get livelihood from this sector. It contributes to socio-economic development. Without taking much of the time, this is a straightforward bill. I want to be clear that we are not discussing the bill or debating the bill, because we shall have time to do that. We are urging you honourable members to grant Honourable Dr. Woda leave to proceed and develop this bill. I know this bill is going to contribute to the economy of our countries, to the livelihoods of our people, to food security, to allow our people to do business in livestock, but in a way that is secure and free from transboundary and zoonotic diseases.

This bill will also help partner states to harmonise existing bills, but also feel an urge of ensuring that other frameworks like policies and strategies in place can also be reinforced. With those remarks, I want to once again thank Honourable Dr. Woda and urge the Assembly to support the bill. Thank you.

The Speaker: Members, we have visitors again in the gallery. We have a delegation of 67 students and 7 teachers of Hope Boarding Secondary School from Kampala District in the central region of Uganda. Let us welcome them. *(Applause)*

Before I put the question, I think Honourable Dr Makame was right. We have two activities this afternoon. We have to take COVID-19 test in preparation for the Kisozi Farm tour. The test is for all members and staff. The test will take place at conference room B next to conference room A at the basement.

Secondly, we also have an event with PEACA where right Honourable Anita Among will be present together with I and the State Minister for Trade and the Chairperson, Parliamentary Fellow, Minister of Community and the Vice President of Private Sector Foundation will be invited.

Honourable Members, I now put the question that this Assembly grant leave to Honourable Dr Woda to introduce a private member's bill entitled "The East African Community Prevention and Control of Transboundary Animal and Zoonotic Disease Bill 2024."

(Question put and agreed to)

(Motion adopted)

(Leave granted)

The Speaker: In relation to the visit to the farm tomorrow, we all have to be there and get ready with the special boots. It could be rainy and we have to walk. Get ready. Please do not come in ties and suits. It will be a special day.

Mr James Kakooza (Uganda): Right Honourable Speaker, I would like to inform the Members that the COVID-19 testing is ongoing for Members who have not done it yet.

The Speaker: Honourable Members, I adjourn the House to Tuesday, 5th November 2024 at 10.00 a.m. Thank you.

(The House rose at 1.12 p.m. and adjourned until Tuesday, 5th November 2024 at 10.00 a.m.)