



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)

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43RD SITTING – FIRST MEETING – THIRD SESSION- FIFTH ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 6th November, 2024

The East African Legislative Assembly met at 9.56 a.m. Parliament House, Kampala, Uganda

PRAYER

*(The Speaker, Hon. Ntakeru
rutimana Joseph, in the Chair)*

(The Assembly was called to order)

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

The Speaker: Honourable members, good morning. My communication will be brief today. We were expecting and are still expecting ministers to be present. They will be with us. We need to give priority to the Council business, particularly the questions and these Bills which have been before the Assembly for a long time now.

I now make adjustment to the Order Paper that we shall handle two motions, and then proceed to questions. In the afternoon, allow the Committee on CTI to meet the ministers and discuss the Statistics Bureau Bill and the Standards Bill so that tomorrow afternoon we are able to handle the Statistics Bill which was returned and possibly receive the report on the Accreditation Bill. You understand that we have been waiting for ministers since the beginning and they have delayed our business as they are now into our business. It is a kind of sacrifice because the committees will have to work hard. Thank you.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY RECOMMENDING TO THE
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TO URGE PARTNER STATES TO IMPLEMENT
APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO PREVENT AND MANAGE FOOD LOSS AND WASTAGE

The Speaker: Is Hon. Francoise around? Honourable members, let us hear from Hon. Gai Deng.

10.01

Ms Gai Deng (The Republic of South Sudan): Mr Speaker, we had problems accessing the precinct of Parliament this morning because of the security situation. Unfortunately, some of our Members are still on the way, including the next motion we have on the Order Paper. Hon. Francoise is not here, Hon. Shahbal is not here either, Hon. Fatuma too. These are the ones with the motions. I think we will have to reconsider the schedule or wait.

The Speaker: Yes. I suspend this meeting. Is Hon. Musamali around? If we have someone, we can proceed. Honourable members, let us suspend the Sitting for 15 minutes to allow Members to get in the room.

(The Assembly rose at 10.03 a.m. and was suspended until 10.25 a.m.)

(The Assembly resumed at 10.25 a.m.)

LAYING OF PAPERS

AUDIT REPORTS OF THE AUDIT COMMISSION ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
OF EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY ORGANS, INSTITUTIONS AND PROJECTS FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 2023

The Speaker: Is the minister around? Honourable minister?

10.26

Ms Beatrice Askul Moe (Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of East African Community (EAC), ASALs and Regional Development): Mr Speaker, in accordance with the provision of Article 134(3) of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community, I beg to lay on the Table the following audited financial statements of the East African Community organs, institutions and projects for the Financial Year ending 30 June 2023.

- a) East African Community organs have three components;
 1. East African Community Secretariat;
 2. East African Court of Justice; and
 3. East African Legislative Assembly.

The three organs are located at the East African Community Headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania.

- b) East African institutions and there are 8 number;
1. Inter-University Council for East Africa in Kampala (Republic of Uganda);
 2. Lake Victoria Basin Commission in Kisumu (Republic of Kenya);
 3. Civil Aviation, Safety and Security Oversight Agency in Entebbe, (Republic of Uganda);
 4. Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation in Jinja (Republic of Uganda);
 5. East African Competition Authority in Arusha (United Republic of Tanzania);
 6. East African Science and Technology Commission in Kigali (Republic of Rwanda);
 7. The East African Health Research Commission in Bujumbura (Republic of Burundi);
 8. East African Kiswahili Commission in Zanzibar (United Republic of Tanzania).

Mr Speaker, each and every organ, institution and project has got a management letter which forms an integral part of the audit report. I beg to lay. (*Applause*)

The Speaker: It is like a nice gift there. Thank you, honourable minister. Before we go to Item 3(ii), I refer this report to the Accounts Committee. Honourable minister, please proceed.

REPORT OF EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TO EAST
AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ON PROGRESS MADE BY THE COMMUNITY IN
THE DEVELOPMENT OF ITS COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICIES

Ms Askul Moe: It is still on the laying of papers. Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the Report on Foreign and Security Policies of the East African Community for the period 2022/2023, pursuant to Article 59(3)(c) of the Treaty. I beg to lay.

The Speaker: Do we have it? This is referred to the Committee on Regional Affairs.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY RECOMMENDING TO THE
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TO URGE PARTNER STATES TO IMPLEMENT
APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO PREVENT AND MANAGE FOOD LOSS AND WASTAGE

The Speaker: Hon. Francoise Umukiza to move the motion.

10.31

Ms Francoise Uwumukiza (The Republic of Rwanda): Mr Speaker, I beg to move the motion that this Assembly resolve to recommend to the Council of Ministers to urge the Partner States to implement appropriate measures to prevent and manage food loss and wastage. I beg to move.

The Speaker: Do we have seconders? The motion is seconded by Hon. Gideon, Hon. Musamali, and others. Thank you. You can now proceed.

Ms Uwumukiza: Motion for a resolution of the Assembly recommending to the Council of Ministers to urge Partner States to implement appropriate measures to prevent and manage food loss and wastage. Moved under Articles 49(2)(d), 59(1), 105 and 110 of the Treaty and Rule 26 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly:

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“WHEREAS one of the key areas of cooperation of the Partner States under Chapter 18 of the Treaty is agriculture and food security, through which the Partner States undertook in Article 105 to cooperate in the area of agriculture and food security in order to achieve food security within the community;

AND WHEREAS under Article 110 of the Treaty, the Partner States agreed to harmonise food supply, nutrition, and food security policies and strategies, and to initiate and maintain strategic food reserves;

RECOGNISING THAT all Partner States are parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights of 1966, which recognises the right to adequate food for everyone in Article 11, Paragraphs 1 and 2;

AWARE THAT Target 12(23) of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, emphasises halving per capita global food waste and the consumer levels and reducing food losses along the production and the supply chains through the transformation of agri-food systems;

FURTHER RECOGNISING THAT on 29 September 2023, the world observed the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste with a call to action for public and private entities to reduce food loss and waste through the transformation of agri-food systems;

ACKNOWLEDGING THAT the Council has adopted for the community the EAC Food and Nutrition Security Policy (FNSP 2016), the EAC Food and Nutrition Strategy 2019/2023 and the EAC Food Security Action Plan 2019/2023 with the overriding objective to eliminate hunger and malnutrition by the year 2023.

NOTING THAT the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) 2022 report on the state of food security and nutrition in the world reveals that global hunger still affects around 92.2 per cent of the world population, between 691 and 783 million people and that hunger is on the rise in all sub-regions of Africa;

CONCERNED BY the alarming level of food loss and waste, which occurs throughout the entire supply chain, from farm stage to harvest to household, including the raw materials and the produce loss in the farming stage, harvesting processes, during transportation and storage, as well as food that the consumers do not finish at restaurants or throw out at home;

FURTHER CONCERNED THAT about one-third of global food supplies are wasted or lost, 2.5 billion tonnes around the world, and in developing countries, 40 per cent of food lost and waste occurs at the post-harvest and processing stages, with the highest magnitude of losses amongst fruits and vegetables, while for milk and dairies, losses occur at the distribution stage of the value chain;

AWARE THAT at the EAC level, the 2024 World Population Review indicated that food loss and waste are estimated at 103 kilogrammes per capita and 1.2 million tonnes per year for Burundi, 103 kilogrammes per capita and 8.9 million tons per year for DRC, 99 kilogrammes per capita and 5.4 million tons per year for Kenya, 164 kilogrammes per capita and 2.1 million tonnes per year for Rwanda, 103 kilogrammes per capita and 1.6 million tonnes per year for Somalia, 103 kilogrammes per capita and 1.1 million tonnes per year for South Sudan, 103 kilogrammes per

capita and 4.5 million tonnes per year for Uganda and 119 kilogrammes per capita and 6.9 million tonnes per year for Tanzania;

RECALLING THAT the 23rd Ordinary Summit of EAC Heads of State held in November 2023 reaffirmed the commitment of the Heads of State to address climate change and food security, including the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices, investment in climate-resilient technologies, and the development of regional policies to foster adaptation and strengthen post-harvest handling, water harvesting, value addition, and irrigation;

CONVINCED THAT it is urgent and necessary for Partner States to act in order to fulfil the commitment under the treaty and of the summit of EAC Heads of State by adopting innovative integrated approaches which offer the opportunity to prevent, reduce and manage food loss and waste as well as alleviate its negative impact on the environment such as intelligent packaging, bio-packaging solutions, online food sharing services, climate-friendly refrigeration systems that help cold chains become more sustainable;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Assembly as follows; that in accordance with Articles 49(2)(d), 105 and 110 of the Treaty, the Assembly recommends to the Council of Ministers to:

- a. Conduct a study on food loss and waste and their impact on climate change in all the EAC Partner States;*
- b. Urge Partner States to conduct awareness campaigns to sensitise their citizens on the need to minimise food loss and waste;*
- c. Urge Partner States to adopt the innovative approaches recommended by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) to prevent, reduce, and manage food loss and waste;*
- d. Develop a new EAC Food and Nutrition Strategy and Action Plan to replace the EAC Food and Nutrition Strategy 2019/2023 and the EAC Food Security Action Plan 2019/2023 including concrete measures to address food loss and waste.”*

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker: Thank you. Now justify your motion.

Ms Uwumukiza: Thank you very much for the opportunity, Mr Speaker. This motion actually originated from core priorities for parliamentary engagement or action for food security and nutrition towards food systems transformation. This food system transformation is about leaving no one behind.

The Speaker: Yes, point of procedure. You have a microphone there.

Dr Siranda: Mr Speaker, is it procedurally right for a Member to move a motion and you okay a Member to proceed with justifying the motion without asking whether there are seconders? Maybe we are not seconding the motion.

The Speaker: Where were you?

Dr Siranda: I have been here, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Maybe you were dreaming. *(Laughter)* We did it.

Dr Siranda: Maybe I was dreaming. That is what the Speaker says. And is that a parliamentary thing for the Speaker to say? It is parliamentary for a Speaker to tell a Member that they are dreaming.

The Speaker: I think that I did it.

Dr Siranda: It is okay. I rest my case.

The Speaker: If you were there, you were somewhere else.

Dr Siranda: I think that is better, Mr Speaker, than telling me that I am dreaming.

The Speaker: I did it, but the way you brought this, it was as if it was a disaster.

Dr Siranda: But is it parliamentary for you to tell me that I am dreaming, Mr Speaker?

The Speaker: Let us proceed.

Ms Uwumukiza: Thank you very much. Mr Speaker, without much ado, extreme hunger not only hurts, but as you said yesterday when we were considering the accountability matters platform – you said that corruption is cancer. Allow me also to let Members and this august Assembly know that hunger also kills and is also a cancer. We need to feel hungry to understand the impact of hunger on our citizens. You know, this community has got people that can afford three meals, even more, especially us. We have our breakfast from our hotels, then we proceed with our what we call 10.00 o'clock break coffee and tea, then lunchtime, then at 4.00 p.m. we also have a break, then dinner, you know all those things.

However, we have citizens we represent that cannot even afford one meal per day. This motion has just arrived to cater for this supply of food we have, to make sure we also feed the hungriest in our community.

Mr Speaker, it is also anchored under two things; the UN SDGs 2030, not only that, but also the African Union Aspiration Agenda 2063, that says, “leaving no one behind”. It is our task as parliamentarians to make sure we feed our people. It is very key because we also use even their fundamental right. It is not a privilege, because people need to be fed, and it is our role.

Mr Speaker, as you know, EAC is a people-centred and market or private-sector-driven community. This is part of EAC principles. If you can read Article 7 of the Treaty, you will find that. When we talk of this centeredness, we are also referring to sustainable development as we talk of SDGs.

However, this Community cannot achieve this sustainable development if we still have food losses and waste that are systematically reducing the quantities of food and are also affecting farmers tremendously. You know how most farmers are women, and we are talking about leaving no one behind. They suffer from post-harvest loss, which leads to reduced income, reduced food and nutrition security, and which impacts their entire livelihoods.

For large-scale businesses, they experience financial risks which have a direct impact on their financial stability and waste disposal costs. I am also referring this to the Committee on CTI. Trade is part of supporting food loss and waste to make sure we also empower the GDPs of our Community and countries.

In addition, the environment suffers from greenhouse gas emissions, generally from food waste, whereas households are unable to access safe, quality and inexpensive food. Last time, I was with Hon. Odongo to consider food prices. It is a problem and really paramount that we find a solution by addressing these losses we are having.

Mr Speaker, as I wind up, allow me to say two things. The first one is on food losses in our supermarkets. The time I had thought of bringing this motion, I had observed that in our supermarkets, when the expiry date of products looms, you find that the products are there, ready to be dumped. They try to discount a little bit for one month, but after two or three days, they cannot even think of giving this food to charity.

I appeal to the Council of Ministers to make sure we initiate a new approach to reduce or even prevent food loss by approaching sellers to make sure we work in harmony and teach them how to give food to charity. It is a good practice; I saw it being done in France. In France, they do not reach the expiry date. Before that, they give food to the poorest or hungriest, so that they can take advantage of that food. So, we should initiate this good practice.

Secondly, as I said, in our respective areas of having food - they are called restaurants, they can be hotels; they can be everywhere - we should interrogate with our stomachs before we serve ourselves or put food on our plates. This is because sometimes, we forget and think that the stomach or the body does not need it and end up leaving the entire food on the plate.

So, it is also something that I would urge the Council of Ministers to raise awareness and even Members of Parliament to support this battle by being responsible, starting with ourselves.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker: Thank you, honourable member.

Ms Uwumukiza: The seconder of this motion is Hon. Paul Musamali. I cannot see him. No; Hon. Kakooza. Sorry; it is because you are seated together. *(Laughter)* Hon. James Kakooza. It is because they were together with Hon. Musamali, I apologise for the oversight. Since Hon. Kakooza is not around, I think Hon. Gai Deng can stand in on his behalf. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Francois. Honourable members, the motion on the Floor is that this Assembly resolve to recommend to the Council of Ministers to urge the Partner States to implement appropriate measures to prevent and manage food loss and wastage. The debate is open and we will start with the seconder, who is Hon. Gai Deng.

10.49

Ms Gai Deng (South Sudan): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to stand here today and second the motion by Hon. Françoise. Since I was not the original seconder, I did not obviously review in detail or do any research, so I am going to talk from common sense and from what she has already presented.

I will start with her statement. Hon. Francoise said that hunger also kills. It does not also kill; it definitely kills and I will start with the contradiction. We are talking about food security, yet at the same time, we are talking about waste. So, how do we actually bridge that gap? Because if there are people who are hungry, how can we justify that there is waste, whether it is post-harvest waste, waste from what is being thrown away from restaurants or waste from the supermarkets, as she has mentioned?

All these are issues, Mr Speaker. It goes back to how we address it. Addressing these issues obviously comes down to money. There are processes or innovative ideas on how you can turn food waste, for example, into energy; ideas where you can turn food waste into agricultural fertilisers and put it back into the field; and ideas where you can empower farmers, especially basic farmers, with innovative ways in which they can avoid food waste. All of this, Mr Speaker, means money

Let me go back to the basics. What we should urge is the national agriculture budget in the national states; that is where it should start. These budgets should reflect all these measures to be taken, which will help us avoid food waste and adopt strategies that can contribute to using waste in a more beneficial manner.

There are other things that can also be done, Mr Speaker. There is no need for us as countries to reinvent the wheel. There are a lot of innovative and technological measures being taken by various countries in the world.

Benchmarking. We can look at the most advanced ways in which waste can be turned into energy and products, and also look at how packaging is done. How do we look at packaging in such a way that the products are friendlier to the environment and can be reused, rather than wasting it and filling the landfills?

So, Mr Speaker, all the issues have been mentioned by Hon. Francoise with regard to developing an action plan which the EAC already has, the one for 2019 to 2023, and the Food Security Action, including concrete measures to address food loss.

These are wonderful ideas, but how do we unpack them and actually look at implementing these measures, so that we are able to tackle the issue of food waste and shorten the gap between waste and hunger?

With those few remarks, Mr Speaker, I support the motion. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you. The Members now want to contribute. Let me get their names. We have Hon. Aisha, Hon. Amongin, Hon. Gideon, Hon. Sadia, Hon. Gladness and Hon. Clément. We will start with Hon. Aisha.

10.53

Ms Aisha Nyiramana (Rwanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I would like, at the onset, to say I support the motion, which is well elaborated. We were looking through the motion and found a kind of paradox because, in the East African Community, a high number of Partner States have registered a high level of food insecurity.

So, it is not understandable to have a high level of food insecurity but also to have a high loss of food and waste. This means that, as Hon. Gai said, we need to think about many efforts to see how we can bridge this gap between hunger and waste. This is very important.

When we look at our population here, the Community is an agricultural community where a high number of the population is producing through agriculture. Let us think about those people who suffer doing agriculture but do not have food to eat because they lack technology. They do not have new technology. They do not know how to store their produce but also, there is no market for them.

So, this is a challenge for the East African Community and we must think about some strategies where we can help our population and see how we can fill this hunger gap.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, we have spoken that we have measures but there is a need for behaviour change. Hon. Francoise has been talking about our plates. We have to think about what we are putting on our plates if we can eat all the food that has been put on them. This is because what we leave on our plates is not only waste but also has consequences on climate change when we are looking at the processing of this waste. So, we want some kind of behaviour change to see how we can reduce this wastage we are talking about.

I would like to ask my colleagues here to stand for zero waste and it is recognised as an international day which is celebrated on 13th March every year. So, I would like to urge my colleagues to stand up and see how we can reduce this waste, and increase food for our population. Mr Speaker, sir, I beg to submit and I support the motion. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Aisha. The next is Hon. Amongin - three minutes.

10.56

Ms Jacqueline Amongin (Uganda): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker and honourable members. I would like to stand firm to second the motion, as proposed by Hon. Francoise Uwumukiza, in regard to food loss and wastage in the EAC.

I would also like to refer us to the Treaty that mandates our being here. Article 105 up to Article 10, whereby there were formulas put in place for the Community to address, especially food loss, through putting in place the different frameworks including policies on agriculture. We cannot talk about food loss and wastage in the EAC or Africa without talking about agriculture because that is our backbone as a continent.

Mr Speaker, you are aware that the East African Community is also one of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) of the African Union. The African Union already came up with a food strategy for food sufficiency within the AU. Therefore, this motion is very timely for securing food among Partner States, especially wastage.

There are people in Africa or the EAC who go to bed without food. When we are talking about food, it includes everything, including water. For example, we have almost 319 million hectares of land in Africa, of which half of this is from Eastern Africa, which is degraded. That is affected by the certification. In Uganda, for example, it is the whole Karamoja sub-region and I know that in most countries, the same applies.

Therefore, when we are talking about this motion on food loss and food wastage, it is important that the East African Community looks at ways of putting in place food banks, so that some of these can address issues, especially in situations where we have a drought that affects our food in the different areas.

Mr Speaker, we cannot talk about food loss and wastage without talking about degraded land, which affects 46 per cent of Africa's land area and at least 485 million people, which is equivalent to 65 people affected and going to bed sometimes with only one meal a day.

Therefore, as we talk about food loss and wastage within the EAC, we should be cognizant of the fact that most of our communities within the EAC have been battling issues related to climate change, including drought. As I speak now, I woke up and my whole village was affected. All crops have been destroyed. There is a hurricane that hit the eastern part of Uganda in Teso where I come from and this is applicable to all the community areas.

So, as we address food loss and wastage within the region, we should be keen on coming up with a comprehensive agricultural strategy for food loss, but also a climate change strategy for the East African Community.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Thank you for your contribution now. We now give the Floor to Hon. Gideon.

10.59

Mr Gideon Gatpan (South Sudan): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I will be brief. I want to declare that I support the motion by Hon. Françoise Uwumukiza. I will only add a prayer, if possible, to the prayers that have already been given.

Let me emphasise that food loss is a matter of great concern to our region. We cannot be wasteful while we are having problems with hunger. So, we need to be more efficient in the management of food.

Mr Speaker, because food loss, food waste and food safety have a direct relationship, I would like to suggest to the motion mover that among the prayers, there should be prayer (e). I suggest that the Assembly urges the Partner States to establish a Food Expiry Early Warning System to provide alerts in all food stores in the EAC region.

The food dealers in the big stores have to declare their food expiry dates to the early warning system management. So, when the food is going to expire sooner, then there will be a limit that you can declare so that if you find out that there is an alternative expenditure, this can be done with regard to the food.

Mr Speaker, I beg to submit and I support the motion. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you. Let us have the next one.

10.59

Ms Sadia Sebit (South Sudan): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. In the first place, I would like to thank the Uganda Chapter for the blessed hospitality they have given us. *(Applause)* Let me go directly to the point.

We cannot overemphasise this. I can give you an example of our country, South Sudan. There are states which are food secure, but in the rest of the states, there is food insecurity. I visited the village where I come from just last month; I was there for almost two weeks. You know, there are plenty of fruits but the problem is the infrastructure. The roads are very poor, plus flooding.

So, this calls for concrete measures to establish proper infrastructural facilities, right away from the state that has plenty of food that can feed the whole country. Besides that, we have the River Nile. We have so much fish. You can see the only thing that we are trading in the Community is mostly fish.

However, if you see how the fishermen and women preserve this fish, they do not use innovative ways to preserve it, so that it can be used for sustainability. Why do you have to store food? You store food for self-sustainability because tomorrow, you may not have it.

It is very sad. For us, we would eat a chicken broiler from Brazil that has been there for one year, yet we have chicken and beef that can get rotten the following day. Imagine! This is because we do not have innovative facilities to help our people.

So, it is very timely that we call for these motions. Imagine a country which only utilises four per cent of its arable land like my country, South Sudan, yet people are food insecure. Why? This is because we have not woken up to the reality to do the right thing. What is required is just proper infrastructural facilities, which is one of the major problems, in my country South Sudan.

When we visited the farmers in Kisozi, one of them said that during flooding, they cannot take their products. So, the traders come and buy from them at a cheaper price. Imagine! So, you can see this dilemma and it is all over East Africa. The issue of infrastructural facilities is core for this issue to be addressed.

With this, Mr Speaker, I do not have much. I submit. (*Applause*)

The Speaker: Thank you. The next is Hon. Gladness.

11.03

Dr Gladness Salema (Tanzania): Madam Speaker, thank you so much for this opportunity to contribute to this very interesting and important motion. I would like to also thank Hon. Francoise for bringing it up.

I support the motion because we all understand that this is very important, as far as food security and food sufficiency are concerned, but at the same time, it also implicates our climate. So, there are diverse effects that we get from food loss and waste. It is also important that we look at it in a way that we have different roles.

When we talk about loss, this is before it reaches the consumer and when it is waste, this is when it is edible. That is the part where it has already reached the consumer. In that case, it is very important to look at how our states can strengthen the supply chains. We have fragmented supply chains which do not support forward and backward linkages, but we also have limited participation of the private sector in our supply chains. So, the missing link also contributes so much to having this problem.

As we recommend to the Council of Ministers, it is important that we also recommend that they promote private sector and civil society participation, in order to mitigate these problems. At the same time, in terms of investing in our supply chain, they can provide strong linkages and support forward and backward linkages.

We also have a problem with data; data governance in this particular aspect is still weak. We do not understand the extent of the problem because data and information are not there. So, I think we need that intelligence which can be able to capture data.

In the Community, we can also foster a circular economy. This is very important and that is what is in modern societies. We make sure that when it reaches a point that it is waste, it is not looked at like it has no value, as has been said by the seconder of this particular motion.

So, it is important that we recommend to the Council of Ministers to see how Partner States can promote and strengthen the circular economy models, and that they should be adopted in our countries. With that, I support the motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Gladness. It is now Hon. Clement.

11.09

Mr Clément Musangabatware (Rwanda): Mr Speaker, thank you very much for this opportunity. I stand to support this motion moved by Hon. Francoise Uwumukiza, a motion for a resolution of the Assembly recommending to the Council of Ministers to urge Partner States to implement appropriate measures to prevent and manage food loss and wastage.

Preventing and managing food loss and waste is crucial for addressing food security, environmental sustainability and lastly, economic efficiency. We have a number of issues. Some have been highlighted by the mover of the motion and the previous speaker. Just to mention a few, we are seriously facing poor infrastructure and storage facilities which can be modernised, consumer behaviour and excessive waste.

Mr Speaker, we must improve our regional infrastructure and storage as well by investing in cold storage facilities and reliable transportation networks and modernising supply chains, among others. We must also think about promoting consumer awareness and behavioural changes by educating consumers on the impact of food wastage.

Once again, I support the motion. Thank you very much for this opportunity. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Musangabatware. I will now go to the honourable ministers if they want to contribute, if any. Honourable minister?

11.11

Ms Beatrice Askul Moe (The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of East African Community (EAC) ASALs and Regional Development): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have heard the conversation and debate around food safety, wastage and climate change, and they are all related to food security within the Community. I believe there is a sectoral committee within the Council that deals with agriculture, food production and safety.

I agree with the fact that this has been approved and it is fundamentally contributed to by the Members. I support the fact that various levels within the Council of Ministers and the various sectoral committees must ensure that we disseminate this information in our Member States so that we reduce what we call “hunger”, as somebody said. Let us reduce the starvation and suffering of our citizens.

So, I believe this is the right way and I agree with your sentiments. I beg to comply, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Thank you, honourable minister. I will now call Hon. Uwumukiza to respond.

11.13

Ms Francoise Uwumukiza (Rwanda): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for again giving me the Floor to address this august Assembly. The motion was well received and I am glad about that. Before I thank people who seconded the motion and contributed, I would like to add input which is key for us to take in.

Hon. Gai Deng, thank you very much for standing firm on behalf of the substantial seconder who was not around. Hunger definitely kills. You added that word and it is very key to know that.

How do we turn food waste into energy? This is technology. How can we support our farmers to avoid food waste? We are addressing all these inputs to the Council of Ministers, just as a reminder. Technology measures are key for packaging and focusing on reusable materials as we package. This is very important to bridge the gap between waste and hunger.

Some members like Hon. Aisha refer to this as bridging the gap. This is very key. As I go to Hon. Aisha, I thank you for supporting the motion which is key. There is a paradox that we have registered a high level of food insecurity which is true. Again, efforts to bridge the gap between hunger and waste are paramount as we use new technologies as per the Heads of State Summit in 2023 where they committed to smart agriculture.

Strategies are needed; behavioural change in our eating manner because what we leave on our plates not only affects the environment but also affects some people that can eat it later on.

Hon. Amongin mentioned something very key that I would also like to tackle: putting in place different frameworks that are related to agriculture is very important or essential and we are also emulating from Africa as our continent. Africa is our mother and we are building from what they initiated.

Food sufficiency, not only in what we call vegetables and fruits but also, water is essential.

You mentioned Karamoja as a sub-region that has land degradation. Not only there but also in Turkana in Kenya. Those are two regions we want to focus on. Council of Ministers, if you allow us, as we are still serving this Community, for Turkana and Karamoja, please let us bring initiatives so that we can reach out to them and see what is going on. Why do we have those people seriously starving when we have a food surplus in Tanzania for instance?

Tanzania declared, during the food summit system in Kigali, that they have 128 per cent so they have a food surplus. How can we allow distribution?

Hon. Gideon, I take your amendment as you enrich the motion. It is very important that the food dealers declare their food expiry dates to the early warning system and I would like to appeal or urge the Council and the CTI to find a way it can be done because it will be something new to be introduced but it is a good practice. How can it be done in partnership with CTI or Trade or maybe EAC Business Council or the private sectors in our countries because it is very important? I take this recommendation and it will be added.

Hon. Sadia, thank you very much. The infrastructural problem you mentioned should be addressed and I really concur with you that we should have available food but distribution or storage is still a problem.

Hon. Gladness, I am thankful for your appreciation. It is also very important that we support the supply chain as we support the motion. I take your added recommendation that we should promote the private sector and also civil society participation. I will also add this as a recommendation so that we can hold the Council responsible for this.

Hon. Clément, thank you for supporting. It is really crucial to note the economic part of food waste and this reduction you are talking about. You also strengthened the fact that poor infrastructure is a problem and that consumer behavioural change should also be brought on board. Storage cold rooms, supply chains, and consumer awareness, as the honourable minister also mentioned that disseminating this information is paramount.

Honourable minister and the Council of Ministers, you have heard this and we are glad that you are committed to taking the agenda forward.

Allow me to thank, in an official manner, all the Members who contributed to this motion starting with Hon. Gai Deng, Hon. Aisha, Hon. Amongin, Hon. Gideon, Hon. Sadia, Hon. Gladness, Hon. Clément, and the Council of Ministers through the honourable representing the Council.

Rt Hon. Speaker, this is an opportunity that you have given to this Assembly and I thank you very much. The Clerks and everyone who took part in this motion so that it can be taken up to another level, thank you very much.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Françoise. You have brought a very good motion because, in my life, I have experienced something like this. When I was a refugee, the country which I was in – because when you are living in those kinds of conditions, you have to suffer. When you were hungry with no food at home, there was a house where we could go and be given soup and even food and a package of rice and something to go back home with. So I understand better than anyone that this motion is welcome.

Honourable members, I now put the question that this House recommends to the Council of Ministers to urge Partner States to implement appropriate measures to prevent and manage food loss and wastage, as it has been amended.

(Question put and agreed to.)

MOTION

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY RECOMMENDING TO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TO ESTABLISH AN INVESTMENT BANK FOR THE COMMUNITY

The Speaker: Hon. Shahbal, move the motion.

11.22

Mr Shahbal Said Suleiman (Kenya): Mr Speaker, a motion for a resolution of the Assembly recommending the Council of Ministers to establish an investment bank for the Community to facilitate industrial development, investment and socio-economic development moved under Articles 79, 80, 83(2)(d), 87, 129 (1)(a), 49(2)(d), 59(1) of the Treaty and Rule 26 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly:

“WHEREAS under Chapter 112 of the Treaty for the establishment of the East African Community, Partner States agreed to cooperate in investment and –

The Speaker: Hon. Shahbal, did you get seconders? If you have seconders, I want to see them. Hon. Francoise, Hon. Musamali, Hon. Gabriel and others. Now you can proceed.

Mr Shahbal: *“WHEREAS under Chapter 112 of the Treaty for the establishment of the East African Community, Partner States agreed to cooperate in investment and industrial development and;*

WHEREAS through Article 80, the Partner States committed to facilitate the development of small and medium-scale industries, basic capital and intermediate goods industries for the purposes of obtaining the advantages of economies of scale and to rationalise investments and the full use of established industries so as to promote efficiency in production and;

WHEREAS Partner States also committed to harmonise and rationalise investment incentives including those relating to taxation of industries, particularly those that use local materials and labour with a view to promoting the Community as a single investment area and to promote joint activities which will promote trade and investment amongst the Partner States;

RECOGNISING that the East Africa Community Investment policy adopted by the Council in 2019 acknowledges that access to finance is a serious challenge in the region, especially for new enterprises and investment projects and that there is a very low rate of savings which cannot generate the required capital to support private and public investment in the Partner States and the joint projects collectively identified by the Partner States under Article 87 of the Treaty and;

ACKNOWLEDGING that although Partner States have provided various incentives and specific sectors and locations with the intention of increasing investment in those areas or regions, this

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has proved inadequate to catalyse development in certain critical areas and disadvantaged regions of the Community.

NOTING that there is a growing need to attract more private investors through public-private partnerships in order to bridge the infrastructure funding gap to meet the investment targets of the Partner States set out in the Sustainable Development Goals;

AWARE that although development banks like the East African Development Bank and the Trade and Development Bank play a vital role, their focus on loan provisions leaves a critical gap in project incubation and early-stage risk mitigation and;

CONVINCED that an East African Investment Bank can drive sustainable economic growth, create jobs and empower the region to tackle the climate change crisis and;

FURTHER CONVINCED that the establishment of an investment bank for the Community will bridge the gap left by the development banks by taking on development risk, providing seed capital and actively supporting project development, enhancing bankability which will, in turn, attract investors and promoting the region as a single investment destination;

RECOGNISING that Article 49(2)(d) of the Treaty empowers the Assembly to discuss all matters pertaining to the Community and make recommendations to the Council as it may deem necessary for the implementation of the Treaty;

Aware that UNDER Article 59(1) of the Treaty, any Member may propose any motion in the Assembly;

THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Assembly as follows:

- 1. In accordance with Article 49(2)(d), 59(1), 79, 80, 83(2)(d), 87 and 129(1)(a) of the Treaty, the Assembly recommends to the Council of Ministers to establish an investment bank for the Community to facilitate the industrial development, investment and socio-economic development within the Community.”*

This motion is seconded by Hon. Francine Rutazana. Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker: Thank you. Please justify your motion.

Mr Shahbal: Honourable members, in our meeting in Nairobi in March, His Excellency President William Ruto challenged us to look for self-reliance in finance. There are many development banks like the East African Development Bank, and the Trade and Development Bank and there are many commercial banks but all of these banks play the role of giving loans. That leaves a very critical shortage that there are no banks in East Africa today which are prepared to invest money in incubation and to promote new projects.

The East African Investment Bank will bridge this gap that is left by the commercial and development banks with early incubation and early-stage risk management. They will take on development risk, they will provide seed capital and actively support project development. They

will enhance bankability and attract investors and they will raise capital from various sources. This is not the same as giving a project loan. This is an idea that many investment projects and opportunities that we have in Africa remain as opportunities because nobody is prepared to take the risk of actually incubating that project and many times, people do not have the capital to start those projects. That is the main difference between an investment bank and a development bank.

A development bank will lend you the money once you have started the project but where is the money to start that project? That is where investment banks come in. They study the project, they put in the seed capital and they attract the capital required to incubate that project.

If you look at World Bank statistics, sub Saharan Africa needs to double its infrastructure to reach the Sustainable Development Goals. The current 3.5 per cent of GDP is far below the 7.1 per cent needed and we are continuously depending on foreign donors and foreign investors. They are having their own economic problems, we are becoming less and less of a priority and the more that we depend on foreign aid and foreign investment, the more Africa will continue to lag behind.

We need to create an institution that will take opportunity and potential to reality. The private sector, DFIs and commercial banks are afraid to invest in green field projects and if you look at any development project, there are always three phases: the development phase where somebody has to put in capital, study that project and raise money for that project. Very few banks are prepared to take that risk.

The second stage is development risk, when the project is now being developed and this is where you find that contractors and equipment manufacturers are prepared to invest because they know the risk.

The third stage is when the project is now operational and generating revenue. At that stage, many pension funds are willing to invest in that project. It is phase one of that project; the incubation period that is badly missing in Africa and that is the role that this bank is envisioned to play. This is the role that the European Investment Bank started after the Second World War and it is the bank that incubated many of the development projects that Europe is benefitting from today.

The proposed shareholding of this bank is in two parts. Number one, we are hoping that the governments of the East African Community will invest in this bank.

The second part is the private sector, the DFIs and other investment banks. Our first challenge *waziri* from Kenya, is to go to our President and tell him, Your Excellency, you gave us a challenge in March, now put your money where your mouth is. I am sure, knowing His Excellency President William Ruto, this is something that he will support.

The areas that this bank will invest in: infrastructure development, for example, power plants. There are few banks that are prepared to invest in the incubation of power plants yet we all know that there is a huge power shortage across Africa but once this power project starts, the equipment manufacturers and the people who do the building or the contractors are willing to invest because they understand that risk. Once these power plants start to generate cash flow, the pension funds are more than happy to invest in them. It is the first part, the incubation part that is missing.

The second one is agricultural development. Every conference you go to, you find people talking about value addition and today, right next door to us, the Ugandan Parliament is debating coffee and I think there is more excitement there than there is here but the numbers are very interesting.

The top five producers of coffee in Africa are Ethiopia, and they export \$1.43 billion. Number two is Uganda \$900 million, number three is Cote d'Ivoire \$100 million, number four is Tanzania \$226 million and number five is Kenya \$252 million. In total, all the top five African coffee producers are selling \$2.9 billion worth of coffee.

Germany, which doesn't grow a single bean of coffee, is the fourth largest exporter of coffee in the world at \$3.3 billion. I mean, come on. It is critical for our economies that if we are going to get to that stage, our farmers will continuously remain poor unless we start with value addition. The numbers speak for themselves.

Kenya is the fifth largest exporter of coffee in Africa and we are doing \$252 million. Germany, \$3.3 billion. There is something wrong with us.

We have recognised the special economic zones that are critical for our development. That is what took China from a third-world country into a first-world economic power, by setting up special economic zones. We need banks to incubate this. If we depend on development banks, it is a long call. This is why you need investment banks that will raise the money for these types of projects.

Mr Speaker, I am hoping that I can convince this House that this is critical for our development. It is important that we go back, if we believe in this idea, to our respective governments and lobby for this thing. We need to find the funding internally to do the feasibility study for this idea, to take it from an idea into a reality and to establish a bank with the right technical competence, the right international relationships and the right corporate governance to make it a world-class institution and I believe we can do it. Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Shahbal. You are very qualified and professional in that matter. We are lucky to have ministers today with us otherwise we would have been talking to ourselves as we have been doing. We believe that they will discuss this issue when they meet.

Honourable members, with this, I propose the motion on the Floor is that this Assembly recommend to the Council of Ministers to establish an investment bank for the Community to facilitate industrial development, investment and socio-economic development. Debate is open but we will start with the seconder who is Hon. Francine from Rwanda. You have the floor.

11.39

Ms Francine Rutazana (Rwanda): Thank you, Rt Hon. Speaker, for this opportunity. Allow me to start by thanking my colleague, Hon. Shahbal for a good and timely motion which is coming to support investment in the region.

Rt Hon. Speaker, the EAC is widening in numbers but when we see how the Community is growing, it can be transformed into a single investment area whereby our small entrepreneurs and

project people and businessmen will be at the level of accessing the long-term investment at a low rate of interest, different to what they get when they go through the commercial banks which are offering high rates for short term loans.

Mr Speaker, we also know that the frameworks in the East African Community have opened opportunities to cooperate in investment and industrial development to rationalise investment and promote efficiency in production through a value chain approach. Such a goal of value chain promotion will not be achieved if the EAC does not have and does not explore innovative and market-based approaches to allow access to long-term loans and also to support suppliers through the value chain process.

The region has already harmonised and rationalised investment incentives which create preferential treatment to small and medium enterprises but also lead to facilitate coordination of present and future consumption to open up a larger financial institution providing capital finance and engaging public-private partnerships and also to design and underwriting new securities and selling them to the investors by adding liquidity to the market.

Rt Hon. Speaker, we see how our business people want to invest but lack the incubation capital. This East African bank will be the opportunity for them to get that amount, resources and funds so that they will not be frustrated when they want to go for long-term loans but the commercial banks are not allowing them to get those long-term loans.

In conclusion, allow me to confirm that the EAC region needs such an investment bank to open up such opportunities to make the region a single area industry, a single investment area and also, an attractive market for investors. This will definitely boost the economy in the region, create jobs and also make the region self-reliant towards sustainable development.

With those few words, Rt Hon. Speaker, allow me once again to thank Hon. Shahbal for a timely motion which will bring and help this region to grow more and more.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Francine. Members who want to contribute: Hon. Alodie, Hon. Caroline, Hon. Akol Rose, Hon. SG, Francoise, Hon. Dr Maghembe, Hon. Kakooza, Hon. Gladness. Please try to be brief. Hon. Saidi, please try to be short to allow the next item to be addressed. We start by- who was number one? Hon. Alodie, we start with you. Can you please give me the names?

11.44

Ms Alodie Iradukunda (Rwanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to voice my support for this motion.

I agree it is a timely motion. One of the things we have been talking about consistently is the need to reinvent the wheel. We need to think outside the box and I think this is one of the major steps we should take in addressing some of our issues. So, the first question one would ask is, why an investment bank?

As Hon. Shahbal has stated, yes, there is a development bank, so why not just make sure that that development bank is empowered as opposed to going into an investment bank? I think, there needs to be more focus on private sector growth as much as there is again a development bank.

I think there is a gap that needs to be addressed where funds for development projects do not really address the needs of small businesses, start-ups and innovative sectors, particularly when it comes to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). As you know, those are mainly run by young people and women; we need to support that. There is that gap that needs to be taken care of.

I also bring in a few statistics to support this motion particularly when it comes to economic data that shows investment needs. In the East African Community (EAC), the investment-to-GDP ratio is at 24.4 per cent. This is below the 30 per cent recommended for rapid growth. In Asia, for example, this ratio is around 35 per cent. We therefore need to increase investments to compete globally.

In Africa- on our continent, the infrastructure financing gap is between \$68 to \$108 billion yearly and the EAC has a big share of that. So, key areas that need more funding include energy, transport and technology. So, that investment bank would bring in private capital for these sectors.

Hon. Shahbal talked about a proposed structure for the EAC Bank, particularly when it comes to the public-private model of partnership. I agree that we need to maximise the impact of the private sector particularly when it comes to funding but I urge Hon. Shahbal- because he did talk about the fact that this would focus mostly on big projects like power plants and special economic zones.

I urge you to consider more funding for SMEs. As I said, that is where the gap in finances is mostly shown in most of the data that we look at.

I also argue that there is a need to improve green investments to support climate-friendly projects to meet our environmental goals.

With this being said, again, I do support the motion. I hope that this will be another way to gain more access to capital for SMEs, boost regional trade and increase job creation. The EAC's population is mostly under 30; those are young people who need employment. We have seen in a number of ways that SMEs are the way to go to fix that problem of employment. I, therefore, support the motion. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Alodie. The next will be Hon. Caroline. Hon. Rose Akol, the Secretary-General, Hon. Françoise, Hon. Maghembe, Hon. Kakooza, Hon. Gladness and Hon. Kibeya. Did we forget someone? Well done. Please be brief.

11.50

Ms Caroline Rwivanga Kayonga (Rwanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to support this very timely motion. I must admit that when I read it when it was on the Order Paper, my immediate question was why do we need an investment bank when we have the East African Development Bank?

However, I thank Hon. Shahbal for clearly justifying this motion. There was so much information that he provided in a very useful justification. The fact that these existing private sector development banks and commercial banks do not invest in incubation projects is very strong- I did not know that.

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I was asking myself about the investment banks in Asia that were developed recently and the European Investment Banks. He made the case for the role the European Investment Bank played in this incubation after the World Wars and how it has helped; they are reaping the benefits today.

I am again thinking of linking with our investment strategy, the whole trade and the integration project itself especially during this critical time. We have been lacking the funds for big investment projects and he clearly made the case and right now, I am thinking of not only the infrastructure but first of all bringing the community together; these grand infrastructure projects.

He talked about the power plants and we are talking about climate change in the energy transition; moving to renewable energy and this is an area- we have the sun and arid regions which demand grand investments which sometimes are not easy to mobilise the funding for. That would be a critical area in the fight against climate change and the energy transition.

We have the natural resources that are needed but no capital to leapfrog in this area. We are waiting for everything to come from China, Asia and all the other areas yet if we could have the East African Investment Bank, it would be very helpful.

We need to strategize in this area of- of course, industrial revolution or the energy transition especially if we could be very strategic in this climate change area. I like that he put this in. Without taking so much of your time, I support the motion. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Caroline. Next is Hon. Rose Akol.

11.52

Ms Rose Akol (Uganda): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me an opportunity to speak to this motion.

First, I thank my honourable chairperson, Hon. Shahbal for bringing this motion and I think it is long overdue. If we as a Community have to change the narrative for this Community and Africa at large, I think this is the vehicle.

A development bank funded by us, the Community- nobody is going to fund it; it can only be us as East Africans to fund it. That is when we will achieve this key objective. This is the way to go;

Europe is for Europe, Africa is for Africa and East Africa is for East Africans. So, if you want to change this narrative of poverty everywhere to development in East Africa, this is it. As we collect resources to run the institutions that are in the Community I think this will be the most key institution that should be established urgently because we are lagging. East Africans and Africa at large are exporting raw materials to Europe, which will ensure that we do that if we do not wake up.

East Africa in particular, is a very rich region. We have all that it takes to change the lives of our people. We have organic foods and minerals, name it. Why are we poor? That is the question you should ask. What do we need to change that narrative? This is one of them and I think it is key.

Mr Speaker, as I conclude, the Council- we move motions, talk to ourselves here, the Council will come and give assurances but you never get any replies or any way forward on the issues that we propose here, very important issues like this one. You never get any reply or way forward on what they have agreed. On this one, I think we shall need to follow up as an assembly if we believe that this is the way to go. We need to follow up to ensure that this East African Development Bank, how do we call it? It is not the other one.

The Speaker: Investment-

Ms Akol: An Investment bank must be established. I thank you for this opportunity and I pray that the intent of this motion will be taken up by the Council of Ministers. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Rose Akol. Now, the Secretary-General. (SG), you have the Floor.

11.57

Ms Veronica Nduva (The Secretary-General, East African Community): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to weigh in on this discussion on this motion.

Allow me to also congratulate Hon. Shahbal for tabling this motion. Indeed, it is a timely intervention that is required and advances our priorities on the common market protocol, specifically on the movement of goods, services and people by investing in the movement of capital.

Allow me to also state from the outset that, yes, indeed, the Treaty established the East African Development Bank- I also state that following the fallout of the first Community in 1967 to 1977, it was agreed that the institutions that belonged to the Community were to remain in the host countries.

Upon the reestablishment of the Community 25 years ago, the Treaty through Article 9 did communicate that the existing institutions would revert to the Community. I state that upon the re-establishment of the Treaty in practice and formally, the East African Development Bank is an institution of the Community but in practice, it is not.

The majority of the shareholders- it has its shareholders and it is still under the Government of Uganda which may also be one of the shareholders; I am not certain about that but I am certain it has other shareholders.

That leaves the Community in a quagmire because the establishment of institutions is only through the Treaty. It calls upon a review because yes, there are certain and several articles within the Treaty that support this motion and I believe that Hon. Shahbal mentioned them; Articles 87, 89 and others that support the establishment of investment, cooperation and so on.

So, what is then the way forward on this motion? Is it needed? Certainly, we do need an investment bank but we do have to unpack the question of duplication of institutions. We have but we do not have. The question is how do we ensure that we have what we have? This then means we are in the procedure and this has been stated.

I take note of the concerns that have been raised by the speaker before me that the Council needs to process this. We will certainly, from the secretariat, bring this to the attention of the Council. It

will go through the normal motions of the Council including being discussed and considered in the Sectoral Council on Trade, Investment and Finance (SCTIF) and onwards until Council.

There is more work to be done because there is a recommendation for the amendment of the Treaty and there are ongoing consultations. I urge the mover of this motion through the existing platforms to also ensure that there is a proposal to amend the Treaty to be able to establish an East African Investment Bank because institutions of the Community are only established through the Treaty. I beg to support. (*Applause*)

The Speaker: Thank you, Secretary-General for that information. Now we go to the next person. Dr Francoise.

12.01

Dr Francoise Uwumukiza (Rwanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will be brief.

After I have heard from the Secretary-General, I rise to commend the mover of the motion. It remains relevant and also useful because having served the Fourth East African Legislative Assembly, I remember how this East African Investment Bank, if established though, through the Treaty as you have said, will continue to make sure we comply with the rules and laws because this House is also the House of rules and laws.

It is useful for the people that are supporting the trade. For instance, we know that there are what we call mergers and acquisitions in trade; these are cross-border trades that are supporting deals when we talk of trade. It is very important that we also talk of equity and debt capital.

The Speaker: There is a procedural matter from Hon. Rose Akol. Can you come to this side?

Ms Akol: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Your microphone is off.

Ms Akol: I rise on a procedural matter that normally when we debate motions or Bills or whatever we handle in this House, once Members have finished to deliberate and contribute, then we call upon the Council and then the Secretary-General.

Now, the Secretary-General has spoken in reply to our contributions and has guided us on the way forward for this motion. Is it procedurally right for us as Members and as a House to continue speaking to this motion when we have already received a reply from the Secretary-General over the matter and also given a way forward? Is it procedurally right?

The Speaker: Now we have started bringing up issues. Procedures after procedures. I am- Yes, Hon. Amongin but be brief on your procedural matter. You can come to the microphone.

Ms Amongin: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am standing on a further procedural matter. As raised by Hon. Akol, I think that the Secretary-General was debating and, in her debate, she was also referring to the East African Development Bank which is actually not an institution of the whole of EAC.

It is an initiative of a certain group of people including Uganda and therefore this very motion that has been brought by Hon. Shahbal is very important that a harmonised EAC Bank or investment institution is put in place.

I do not think it is right for this debate to end because this is a very important motion that Members would want to contribute to. I think that the Secretary-General was giving her opinion, of course as the person in the steering and I think that she would also benefit from the debate of this motion.

I wonder whether it is procedurally right for us to really- this is the backbone of our integration. Is it right for us to end the debate when people are enthusiastic about this particular motion?

The Speaker: Honourable members, the SG has contributed as you are contributing. That is why it is in order to continue debating this motion. Let us continue debating. Hon. Francoise, proceed.

Dr Uwumukiza: Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is very important that we continue to brainstorm on this important matter because what the SG has just mentioned, there was a kind of guideline that we are supporting each other; the Secretariat, EALA as an Assembly and the Council of Ministers because we are one team moving forward together. No one will leave another one behind

The advantages of having this bank are also in terms of economic research because what does exist does not facilitate the research because dealers need research, equity and trade finance facilities. Those are not in place.

Providing trade finance facilities such as letters of credit and guarantees to facilitate cross-border trade within the EAC region is paramount because we need a big investment that will support all of these issues we are dealing with.

I think it is in order that we continue to brainstorm on this and also to add value to what already exists but if we innovate as an assembly, it is in order.

You know how the Committee on Communication, Trade and Investment (CTI) is interconnected with agriculture. When we talk of value addition and value chain, we cannot just go without adding this input because it is very important that we boost our industrial development in terms of our initiatives; what we can bring to the Community that is innovative, new, speed up and accelerates the widening and deepening of the integration. Thank you. I submit and I support the motion.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Francoise. Now we go to Dr Maghembe.

12.08

Dr Jumanne Ng'waru Maghembe (Tanzania): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. My contribution will be brief.

I congratulate Hon. Shahbal. This is an example of a motion that brings practical solutions to the challenges that our business people are facing within the Community and I would like to say that during my study years, a long time ago, when I was doing my PhD, this is one of the issues that I was looking at.

I was looking at the issues of the cost of credit, why is the cost of credit high and why is the cost of production high within our region? You will find that the cost of production in East Africa is 25 per cent of the value of the things that you sell while in China it is eight per cent.

One of the reasons is we have very poor infrastructure within our region and two is because the cost of credit is very high. In East Africa, on average the cost of credit is about 18 per cent to 21 per cent while in countries like China, America and Indonesia, it is 3 per cent to 4 per cent. This bank will- it is a very good idea.

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We support the motion, Hon. Shahbal. Once this bank is established- we hope that the leadership of the Community takes it seriously, once it is established, it will help lower the cost of credit and also it will invest in infrastructure.

Investing in infrastructure cuts the cost of production almost in half and you heard Hon. Shahbal here talk about the special economic zones. The Chinese implemented the special economic zones but also improved their roads and their railway system. If you go to China, travelling from South Africa to Kenya is three to four hours with their bullet trains and they have a network like this throughout the whole country.

We support this motion heavily and we will do our best to give you support. It must not just end here as a motion; it must happen. *(Applause)* After those few words, thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, Dr Maghembe. Now Hon. Kakooza.

12.10

Mr James Kakooza (Uganda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also add my voice to support the motion. I think this motion is concerned with the investment bank to facilitate industrial development, investment and socio-economic development.

Do the existing banks do that? For me, those existing banks do not do the objective of this bank because if it was doing that, on the continent we have- all our partner states always go to Exim Bank in China and the African Development Bank.

This innovation of an investment bank is a mobilisation of resources that includes private-public partnerships. One of the reasons the Asian Tigers succeeded in being first-class and number one, is that where governments could not provide a service, they went for public-private partnership but why?

There were people funding those projects that were able to spur the economy of that country. I travelled from Singapore to Kuala Lumpur by road. It takes about three hours but that road attracted an amount of money worth \$255 billion.

What they did was to go for a public-private partnership in the investment bank and they collected a return on the resources which were met. The Government got a service and even people who had invested got a return on their investment. In Africa here, especially in East African banks, we have the one that the Secretary-General is talking about which does not support infrastructure development. You hear that it goes to SMEs.

We investigated last time that the shareholders within the partner states do not even contribute more than the foreigners. We cannot drive Partner States to economic growth when we are begging from donors. Look at the funding of value addition; the whole growth of crops in Africa, like what Shahbal said, in Europe, they rarely produce the amount of coffee we produce. But, they are the best beneficiary of this. Coffee attracts \$45 billion in the world. Africa is picking only, I think, \$8 billion. You can imagine the difference between \$45 billion and \$8 billion. Our environment makes us benefit more than those who do not grow it, especially in Germany where they say they are the largest producers of Nescafe. But we are exporting raw materials to these countries. So, value addition cannot be there without having access to funds.

A coffee factory cost more than \$15 billion. So, when you do not have an investment bank to lend money to the private sector, you will not get it. The only way out to survive for the prosperity of our people is through innovations like this bank so that we cut costs on investments.

Two days ago, we discussed the transport on lakes. Mr Speaker, I told you that picking a boat in Tanzania from Zanzibar to Dar es salaam costs about \$8 million without taxes. But if you had an investment bank to deal with infrastructure, we would not have gone to Exim Bank to borrow. We would have gone to that bank so that it would help us with our infrastructure. With those few remarks, I would like to support this investment bank. It was needed as soon as yesterday. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Kakooza. Now, Hon. Dr Kibeya -

12.15

Dr Saidi Kibeya (Burundi): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for allowing me to support heavily this motion presented by Hon. Shahbal which is a critical point for implementing Article 79 of the Treaty. We know that Article 80, the Strategy and Policy for Industrial Development - twelve years ago, the Council adopted the right strategy for industrial policy and strategy, but up to now if we can evaluate, there is little that has been done in the areas of agro-processing, mineral processing, automotive, electronics and so on as a priority raised or identified in the right strategy.

We may recall that the Community also established a Commission for the development and application of science technology and innovation in the Community. We may also recall that a number of centres of excellence were established to tackle the development of industrial capacity in our region. I recall that the Protocol for Common Market Development, around Article 42, is for industrial development and a couple of industrial development and investments are there. That is why the Council presented a budget for harmonisation of the Investment Code Model in the Community.

However, the investment code that we have in our Partner States relies mainly on supporting foreign direct investment. With this, how can we promote what is said - the self-sustaining and balanced industrial growth in our Community knowing that our economic growth share from the industrial sector is about 10 to 11 per cent only. We may recall the weaknesses of our economies, maybe remembering how we suffered during COVID-19 because growth was only contributed to by the primary sector - agriculture and also services.

We can learn from history. History is there to teach us. The zones of Southern and Eastern Asia have sustained their growth beyond 10 per cent for more than 10 years because they went to industrial development. If we want to win the competitiveness for the Continental Free Trade Area of Africa, let us move to support our capacity for developing our industrial sector heavily. This motion has come at the right time. I think we have to support heavily this motion. That is why I stood up to support the motion presented by Hon. Shahbal. I thank you very much.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Saidi Kibeya. Now, we go back to the ex-officio Members to contribute if they wish to contribute.

12.20

Ms Beatrice Askul Moe (The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of East African Community (EAC), ASALs and Regional Development): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable members, I have heard you speak of the critical issues sometimes spoken in the Assembly that need the attention of the Council. Maybe we need to agree together on the issues you discuss weekly, or the ones where you put a lot of emphasis on, when do we share them in advance with the Council because they are not only attendants here in terms of being the ex-officio, they are also very committed in their Member State countries in terms of the commitment, duties and the roles they perform as ministers and as Cabinet Secretaries.

Therefore, sometimes activities tend to conflict and if you were really to be in our shoes, you would understand. Sometimes, the programmes clash and the timetables clash. You know you cannot delegate the roles anyhow.

The Speaker: Honourable minister, you are here to contribute.

Ms Askul: I am going to do that, Mr Speaker. I am only putting that as a comment for that matter, just to respond to the concerns from members. The reason why I am here is to put my opinion in regard to this. I feel their conversation is very wanting. There is a need to look at what the Secretary-General (SG) spoke of - the past things that were established within the Community in the name of the East Africa Development Bank, that is back in 1967.

Given the position and the years we have walked through the journey of being a Community, there is a need to relook into the provisions we used to have whether there is a need to put some points right here that would revisit some of these institutions we had and then guide properly whether we even need to explore the many gaps in between since then so that we can be able to strengthen ourselves given the current situation of the economy and the challenges that we face as a Community so that we strengthen and move forward.

Again to look at the investment in itself and the roles that *Mheshimiwa*, Shahbal spoke about. They are very instrumental, and insightful, and at least I can say that it is something not to ignore. You cannot ignore that bit. There is a need to relook. The amendment of the Treaty was proposed, I think, a few months ago by the Council, and I think these are part of the things we will look into and then strengthen our way forward. I know that within the Council, there is the Council Secretary in charge of finances and they will look into this. We shall also find their opinions so that we put all these opinions together and then come up with a proper way forward. Mr Speaker, I intend to leave that matter.

The Speaker: Thank you, honourable minister. Do you have a microphone?

12.23

Mr Mashaka Ngole (Tanzania): Mr Speaker, I am standing under the provisions of Rule 47(d) of the Rules of the Assembly relating to clarification. Mr Speaker, according to what I have heard from the Secretary-General and also the honourable minister here, for this resolution to be workable, it needs the amendment of the Treaty, which is not in the powers of the Council of Ministers. I have also read Chapter Three of the Treaty which provides for the establishment of the institutions within the Community. The powers are granted to the Summit.

I have also read the resolution that has been made. The resolution says, or requires, the Council of Ministers to establish an investment bank. The resolution as it is, is not workable. It needs first the Treaty to be amended so that the establishment of the bank is agreed upon by the Summit.

Mr Speaker, in those circumstances, I would wish this resolution to be struck out because it is not workable and actually it contradicts the provisions of the Treaty as these powers are not in the hands of the Council of Ministers. I beg to move.

The Speaker: Honourable Chairperson of the Committee on Legal, Rules and Privileges- Hon. Musamali, wait. Honourable Chairperson of the Committee on Legal, Rules and Privileges, if you have a question to ask the ex-officio Members who are with us, you can formulate it and you will ask them. Otherwise, what you have brought here are concerns; they are not clarifications. What did you move? Go and formulate your questions properly. Honourable Chairperson -

Mr Ngole: Mr Speaker –

The Speaker: Go back to your seat. Formulate your question properly and then ask it properly. Then we respond. Otherwise, you know that our report here, our motions, you know how the way they follow. They go to the Council of Ministers, then they go to - Thank you, honourable chairperson. Now, I invite the mover, Hon. Shahbal to come and reply.

12.21

Mr Said Shahbal (Kenya): Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have supported this motion, including the honourable Secretary-General and our Minister from Kenya.

The Secretary-General raised a very important question in that there are already existing development banks and are we duplicating efforts? Yes, Madam Secretary-General, there are development banks, but the very nature of development banks is to finance not to incubate. It is not in their DNA to put capital at risk by starting projects. That is not the mandate of development or commercial banks to take.

We have identified that there is no shortage of lending capital. There is no shortage of banks that can lend. Where the shortage is, is the capital to actually start these projects. Development banks lend money to such projects. We need banks that can incubate. For example, if we look at Uganda here, there are many regions that have gold but investors are scared to go in and start. However, if one company is established and it goes in there and succeeds, it will open the floodgates to investment in that area. That is the role of the investment bank. I refer to the comments of my co-chairman from legal.

Unfortunately, this is a challenge of lawyers; they always look at problems rather than solutions. The lawyers are designed in their contracts to design all contracts like divorce documents, who will keep the cat and who will take the dog. But I am coming here from a private sector perspective. Let us find solutions, not problems. If there are challenges in the Treaty and we are determined to make this thing happen, we will find solutions. *(Applause)*

Therefore, I want to thank everybody who contributed to this thing. I am convinced that if we set up this bank, it will make an enormous difference to the development of our region. Thank you, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Shahbal. Those who have contributed to the motion are Hon. Alodie, Hon. Caroline, Hon. Rose Akol, the honourable Secretary-General, Hon. Francoise, Hon. Dr Maghembe, Hon. Kakooza, Hon. Kibeya, and the honourable Minister.

Honourable members, I now put the question that this House do recommend to the Council of Ministers to establish an investment bank for the Community to facilitate industrial development, investment and socioeconomic development.

(Question put and agreed to)

PRIORITY QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWER

The Speaker: Hon. Rose Akol - Is she around? She walked out. She is not in the Chamber. I am informed that our minister is not ready now to answer questions, maybe tomorrow. The motions which are there – For whom was the next motion?

MOTION

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY URGING THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TO RECOMMEND TO THE SUMMIT TO URGENTLY CONSTITUTE A PANEL OF EMINENT PERSONS TO FACILITATE AND SUPPORT PEACE AND SECURITY AND THE MANAGEMENT OF CONFLICT IN THE COMMUNITY

The Speaker: This is for Hon. Paul Musamali.

12.33

Mr Paul Musamali (Uganda): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to move this motion. “Motion for a resolution of the Assembly urging the Council of Ministers to recommend to the Summit to urgently constitute the panel of EAC eminent persons to facilitate and support peace and security and the management of conflict in the Community.” It is moved under Article 49(2) (d), 59(1) of the Treaty and Rule 26 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly. I beg to move, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you. Do you have seconders? Hon. Dr Siranda, Hon. Oluka, Hon. Gideon, Hon. Kadogo, and others.

Mr Musamali: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and thank you, Members, for seconding and supporting this motion:

“WHEREAS, under Article 5 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community, the Partner States undertook to promote peace, security, and stability within East Africa and good neighbourliness among the Partner States;

WHEREAS THROUGH Article 124 of the Treaty, the Partner States agreed that peace and security are prerequisites to social and economic development within the Community and vital to the achievement of the objectives of the Community;

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RECOGNISING THAT the Partner States have concluded and are implementing Protocols on peace and security and cooperation in defence affairs, and the Council has adopted a strategy on regional peace and security and conflict prevention, management and resolution mechanism;

NOTING THAT the regional peace, security and conflict prevention, management and resolution mechanism provides for the establishment of a panel of eminent persons to facilitate and support mediation and negotiation as a strategy for managing conflict in the Community;

AWARE THAT in 2015, the 16th Ordinary Meeting of the Summit of EAC Heads of State approved the modalities for the appointment of the East African Community Eminent Persons and Special Envoys, and decided that eminent persons and special envoys will be appointed whenever the need arises;

APPRECIATING the role of the Summit in providing direction and guidance to the community and reviewing the state of peace and security in the Community;

CONVINCED that in order to foster and maintain an atmosphere that is conducive to peace and security and in order to promote better management and the resolution of disputes and conflicts in the Community, it is necessary to constitute the panel of eminent persons;

RECOGNISING THAT Article 49(2) (d) of the Treaty enjoins the Assembly to discuss all matters pertaining to the community and make recommendations to the Council as it may deem necessary for the implementation of the Treaty;

AWARE THAT under Article 59(1) of the Treaty, any Member may propose any motion in the Assembly.

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

That in accordance with Articles 49(2) (d) and 59(1) of the Treaty, the Assembly recommends to the Council of Ministers to urgently recommend to the Summit to constitute the panel of eminent persons to facilitate and support peace and security and the management of conflict in the Community.”

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The seconder is the Hon. Kennedy Mukulia. However, when I look around, he seems to still be attending to another matter. Hon. Gideon Gatpan is standing in.

The Speaker: Thank you for moving. Now, justify your motion.

Mr Musamali: Thank you, Mr Speaker, once again for allowing this motion. As you may have read, all of you Members, from the head of the motion itself, it is about providing a mechanism for conflict resolution in the region. However, Mr Speaker, before I make the justification, I want to take this opportunity to thank the Government of the Republic of Kenya through its Arm of the Judiciary.

This morning I heard on the radio that the High Court in Kenya has convicted two people who participated in the murder of a Ugandan athlete in Eldoret in 2023 called Benjamin Kiplagat. These criminals have been sentenced to 35 years in jail, Mr Speaker. I found it very necessary to appreciate the Government of Kenya for the speed they put in ensuring the justice of the late Kiplagat.

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Mr Speaker, about the motion, as you may be aware, the Community does not have a permanent conflict and peace enforcement mechanism. All the mechanisms that we have are basically temporal. They are basically temporal, like the East African Stand-by Force. We do not own it. We just mobilise forces here and there. All the security and peace mechanisms that are there are basically temporal.

Mr Speaker, Article 124 of the Treaty, as already alluded to, Partner States, through the Heads of States, agreed that for us to move as a Community, peace and security is a prerequisite, and therefore, it is a precursor for development. By the way, I will give an example. If you want to test the absence of peace, go to Somalia. There is no meaningful development there. Even here in Eastern Congo, within our own region, people are dying every day because of insecurity.

Besides conflicts that are caused by either ethnic conflicts or tribal, or because of shared resources, or - the artificial borders which we have - Mr Speaker, many of us have experienced conflict, but sometimes there has been a lack of a mechanism to address these conflicts. As you may all be aware, conflict is an inherent or a natural phenomenon. We cannot avoid it and it will always be there. People will conflict, either over resources or even over – I will not mention some of the things to avoid putting them on the record. At least you know them very well.

I will give an example: conflict continues to occur within Partner States or among Partner States. For example, within Uganda or between Uganda and another Partner State. I can give an example of conflict over artificial boundaries. We have had problems. Uganda and South Sudan have had a long-standing conflict over the artificial boundaries. Every day, people have been killing each other there. Yet they are the same people – from one side or the other side of the border. They are the same but because of the artificial boundaries, people have continued fighting and even killing each other.

We have shared resources. Lake Albert is shared between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lake Victoria is shared by three Partner States – Kenya, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. You are all aware of the problems we have had on Lake Victoria. People are fighting over fish, saying that this fish belongs to Tanzania or this fish belongs to Kenya – I do not know whether fish can recognise borders in the water. *(Laughter)*

Then on Lake Albert, we have had the same with the DRC. I am just giving those simple examples.

There is another strange one where Uganda and Kenya have had a long-standing dispute over a one-acre island called Migingo; you can imagine. We expect that all these things will continue if we do not put in place mechanisms to provide a solution.

In the Peace and Security Protocol, it is provided that there shall be a panel of eminent persons from the Community who will be appointed by the Summit such that they will be there to help in terms of negotiations, mediation and even preventing potential conflicts and issues that will create insecurity.

However, in 2015, the Heads of State in their 16th Ordinary Meeting sat and agreed on the modalities for the appointment of the panel of eminent persons. However, they also went ahead and said that this panel shall be appointed as and when the need arises.

I find this rather disturbing because conflict is almost a continuous phenomenon. If we say that we shall wait for conflict or insecurity to first occur and that is when we shall have this panel – first

of all, it takes a bureaucratic process to have members convene the Summit and agree – by the way, the Summit is made up of Heads of State of the Member States. The conflict may be between two or three Partner States. For the Summit to take place and agree on that mechanism, they will need all of them. Those who may be conflicting, one or two may refuse to come and attend the meeting. You will find it quite troublesome.

That is why I have come to seek your support here, honourable members, that we recommend to the Council of Ministers to urge the Summit – because this is a Summit matter – to have this panel put in place such that we are able to provide a mechanism. We should not wait for Americans and Europeans whenever there are problems in the Community. I beg to move and submit. I ask for your support, honourable members. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Musamali. I now propose the motion that this Assembly urges the Council of Ministers to recommend to the Summit to urgently constitute the panel of EAC eminent persons to facilitate and support peace and security and the management of conflict in the region. Debate is open and we start with the seconder, Hon. Gideon.

12.48

Mr Gideon Gatpan (South Sudan): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand in for Hon. Kennedy who is the substantive seconder on the motion paper. I stand in because this motion moved by my brother Hon. Musamali is one that has come timely. Thank you, my brother, Hon. Paul Musamali.

As a region, our prosperity or economic and social development is dependent on the maintenance of peace and security. Without maintaining and sustaining efforts to ensure peace and security, we cannot be confident that we are going to have the prosperity that we are aspiring to.

As mentioned in the motion, the regional peace and security and conflict prevention management and solution mechanism provided for the establishment of a panel of eminent persons to facilitate and support mediation and negotiation as a strategy for managing conflict in the community.

Why is it important for the region to establish a panel of eminent persons? A need-based panel is almost dysfunctional. We have seen it and we have experienced the outcome of a need-based panel. It has limitations and weaknesses because they come at a time when the conflict has already taken dynamics.

Let me highlight a few issues. The panel of eminent persons by virtue of its functions as defined in the instruments given as I mentioned earlier is not only dealing with a conflict that is already ripe, it is also dealing with conflict prevention. It conducts preventive diplomacy. It works in collaboration with the early warning centre of the EAC.

Therefore, the basic mandate of this panel is when a conflict arises and it is indicated by the early warning centre in our Community, the panel conducts preventive diplomacy to prevent that conflict. When they succeed in dealing with that conflict, they have limited a conflict that would have had a bad impact or consequences in our Community.

However, when the conflict is ripened, then they work together with experts on alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. They can be able to be in a position to advise the Summit – let me share the angle from which we look at the current need-based panel of eminent persons: these people

have, by virtue of their seniority in the community, leverage on our leaders. We need them to be on duty full-time so that they move.

For example, if the early warning centre has indicated a red alert that there is a conflict between two Partner States or with another immediate state close to our region, we have to report it to the same Council of Ministers. This Council of Ministers might include players in that conflict if the conflict arose between two countries.

Therefore, you need people who have leverage and have a full mandate to be able to act independently and neutrally, to give an independent view of what should be done.

Mr Speaker, as I conclude my submission – (*Interruptions*)

The speaker: Procedure

Mr Mashaka Ngole: Mr Speaker, I have looked at my watch and I realised that we have only five minutes left. According to our Rules of Procedure, our time of meeting should end at 1 p.m. So we are about to finish.

In view of the above, I would like to move for a motion that this Assembly resolves that we extend the time so that we give extra minutes for this motion to be wound up by the mover. Thank you.

The Speaker: Do you have seconders? Seconded by Hon. Amongin, Hon. Musamali, Hon. Sankok, Hon. Gideon and others. Honourable members, I put the question that – Yes, amendment? Sorry, can I proceed? Thank you. I now put the question that those who are in favour of the motion moved by Hon. Ngole, say “aye”. Those against say “nay”

(Question put and agreed to)

The Speaker: Hon. Gideon, proceed.

Mr Gatpan: Thank you, Mr Speaker, as I conclude, we have examples. We have visited SADC as a Committee on Regional Affairs. We have also visited COMESA. We have visited the IGRS in Burundi.

We have learned the difference between a need-based mechanism or a need-based panel to handle issues of conflict and a permanent or continuously mandated body to deal with the rising conflict in the region. Mr Speaker, it is high time that we support this motion and encourage our Council of Ministers and the Members of Parliament to be able to advance these ideas, to urge our Summit, to be able to form the panel or constitute the panel of eminent persons.

Mr Speaker, I submit and I urge the honourable members to support the motion. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Gideon- You will be given the Floor. You will be the one to contribute, but let us first take the names. When you are contributing, you will be able to amend. Let us take the list of the names, then you will have the Floor. You are not going anywhere. Yes, you will be given the Floor as the first Member to be given the Floor.

Hon. Amongin, why are you forcing? Can you please go back and sit down? Is that a point of order? Hon. Amongin, let us first get the list of those contributors, then you will be among them, maybe the number one. We are taking down those who want to contribute. We have Hon. Blacks,

Hon. Sankok, Hon. Luken, Hon. James, Hon. Kadogo, but Hon. Amongin, you will be the first one, and finally Hon. Clement. Hon. Amongin, you have the Floor.

12.56

Ms Jaqueline Amongin (Uganda): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Apologies if I have hurt anybody. I am just trying to follow our rules. Thank you.

First of all, I stand here to support the motion as brought by Hon. Musamali Paul with amendments. Why I insisted that I bring this amendment, prior to the whole House debating this motion, it helps the Members to ascertain whether this amendment is imperative or not, or whether we could include it here or not.

The motion, as read by Hon. Musamali, reads a motion for the resolution of the assembly urging the Council of Ministers to recommend to the summit to urgently constitute a panel of EAC eminent persons to facilitate and support peace and security and the management of conflict in the EAC.

Why I have come up with an amendment to this motion is that there are also very many pertinent issues within the EAC besides peace and security. It would not be good tomorrow to come up again with another motion recommending for the Summit to constitute eminent persons in other sectors.

Mr Speaker, when we are talking about peace and security in the Community, as you are aware, Uganda is one of the biggest refugee host regions in the world. Actually, it is the second in the world. Most of these refugees may have been refugees either through political refugees or it is estimated that by 2030 we will have more refugees in regards to climate shocks in the whole world and not necessarily in the EAC region.

Therefore, my amendment is that while we look at appointing these eminent persons to address issues of peace and security in the region, I would like to amend this motion that we not only look at peace and security in the region, because one of our strongest challenges of the time is the degradation of our lands, hurricanes have made people to be displaced from one place to another. And that causes insecurity because of competition for limited resources with the host communities.

My amendment is that instead of looking at only peace and security, we should also recommend that on top of peace and security, eminent persons – we have experts in the region on issues of environment and climate change, and our agricultural yields are losing out because of the GMOs and all this. Therefore, we could also have eminent persons in areas of agriculture.

That is the amendment I am bringing, but otherwise, I strongly support this motion and I would actually look at this eminent person looking at our pillars of the integration, instead of only picking peace and security. That is my opinion.

Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Amongin. With climate change issues, we will face crises. I do not know how you can formulate this because his amendment was about politics, conflicts - something like that. Hon. Musamali, are you taking the amendment?

Mr Musamali: Mr Speaker, procedurally, I will do it -

The Speaker: You will respond when you have the Floor.

Mr Musamali: I will do it in the reply. Thank you.

The Speaker: You are welcome. I will now give Hon. Sankok the Floor. Please give me the list. Can I get the list of the names?

1.03

Mr David Ole Sankok (Kenya): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to support this timely progressive motion by Hon. Paul Musamali.

This motion of having eminent personnel within our Community is timely. It is progressive and very important, Mr Speaker, because conflict, just like the mustard seed, starts small and grows big. It is easier for you to prevent conflicts when they are still small at teething stages and when they are starting their growth.

Conflict normally happens like a spark that starts small but over time, it becomes a forest fire and unstoppable. If that cigarette that caused that spark was put out efficiently and timely, then we would not have forest fires that have destroyed homes and a lot of property. That is how conflicts start.

Mr Speaker, when we have eminent personnel put on a need basis; before we go into the protocol of who is supposed to be one of the eminent personnel, we, first of all, have to see their qualifications. Who qualifies to be the eminent personnel, yet at the same time, conflict is growing to a stage that will become unstoppable?

For me, this one is very important, so that they are ready. They will study our region and know where possible and what potential conflict indicators are so that they can stop the conflict while it is still small.

Mr Speaker, I can give an example of the Masai. The Masai live in Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi. They have an eminent personality called “Laigwanak”. These eminent personnel are always ready and the Masai from Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi respect them. Whenever there is conflict in terms of pasture or water, they go and give warnings. They go and solve those conflicts before they escalate.

If a single community can be able to have them, then I believe a whole region of 350 million people should actually put in place this very important institution. So, Mr Speaker, with those very few remarks, I support and say that Hon. Paul Musamali, you are a progressive thinker. You really thought out this noble idea wisely. Let us support you. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Sankok. On the list, we have Hon. Gideon, Hon. Siranda and Hon. Luke; are there others? Hon. Kadogo, Hon. Clement and Hon. Millya.

1.07

Dr Gerald Siranda (Uganda): Mr Speaker, from the onset, I support the motion. The issues of peace and conflict resolution are at my heart. Hon. Musamali is actually helping our committee, the Regional Affairs and Conflict Resolution, to perform its oversight duty in this role. I would like to propose an amendment before I support the motion.

Mr Speaker, issues of peace and security go together with mediation. I know mediation might have been mentioned in the justification of the motion, but it would not do harm if we added the question on urging the Council to support peace, security, conflict management, resolution and mediation. This is because sometimes, conflict can be managed or resolved.

The essence is that even when they are not resolved, you can manage and live within, but the conflict can also be resolved completely. Also, if they are not, we must add the question on mediation because it is important to design a strategy, in terms of how we mediate the issues of our security.

Peace and security are strategic components for our people. Mr Speaker, to achieve the Common Market that we speak about, there must be peace. For our people to benefit from the Customs Union and Non-Tariff Barriers, there should be peace for them to freely trade within. It is very important and imperative that we have a set body like that known with the roles, terms and references, it also helps in understanding the frameworks.

If you have a body as we have, which is a loose body and kind of a kangaroo court - you assemble it when you get it – sometimes, you do not design a proper framework. But if you have a body with a mandate, you will have a framework because for you to design a strategy on peace and conflict resolution as a Community, there must be a framework, in terms of how people will operate. There must be a framework for the implementation of what has been agreed upon. There must be a framework, in terms of monitoring and assessing, so that we deal with issues of reoccurrence of the conflict.

Mr Speaker, it is very important that a Community like ours that is bringing people who have lived together but have issues requires a mandate for these very eminent persons. I agree that we can look at specific aspects; having issues because of disaster and all the rest, but these are specific pillars.

I think Hon. Musamali, in my opinion, is moving rightly with this motion, not to mix in any other thing. We can have several other eminent people dealing with specific aspects. Given that these are specific matters assigned with specific chapters, we cannot have a mixture. Otherwise, we will get lost along the way.

The proposal by my comrade, Hon. Jacqueline, is a good one, but we cannot stop dealing with specific eminent persons for a particular aspect of the matter. (*Applause*) Once you deal with these matters of peace and conflict resolution, some of them are on resources. Some of them are on disaster management, while others are on migration and forced migration.

I am sure Hon. Musamali is aware that the areas of forced migration fall within this area of the particular chapter we are dealing with. So, Mr Speaker, I believe that this motion is very timely. We can never have a Community that is growing as fast as this one.

Sometimes, I believe we are widening more than deepening. We require the modalities on how we resolve our issues. How do we deal with mediation, given that we are growing every day? Growth is very important, but Hon. Musamali is giving us a perspective and shock absorber, in terms of how we will deal with it.

Mr Speaker, peace and mediation committees work as coolers. Sometimes, we are all hot-tempered; we need a cooler that will allow us to cool, in terms of how we want to mediate. We shall have a series of them that deal with particular matters, and they will undergo training. They also come in, based on their background, history and what they have been dealing with.

I do not want to waste a lot of time, but I believe that a question dealing with sustainability, recovery and reconstruction into peace-building requires a body that will help to point us in a direction where we are going to build one people and one destiny as we grow. Mr Speaker, I beg to submit and second the motion. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Siranda. Next is Hon. Luke.

1.12

Mr Luke Thomson Teny (South Sudan): Mr Speaker, I will not indulge much of the attention of the honourable members because the previous speakers before me, Hon. Ole Sankok and Hon. Siranda Black, have done justice to this motion in support of it. On that basis, I will only declare my support for the motion. Thank you so much. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Luke, for being brief. Yes, Hon. James?

1.13

Mr James Kinyasi Millya (Tanzania): Mr Speaker, I want to congratulate my brother, Hon. Musamali, for bringing this topic and motion. Mr Speaker, I speak from a background of being from Tanzania, a country that has enjoyed over 60 years of peace, security and stability. So, being part of this country, I know exactly what he wants to bring on board.

However, in most cases, be it in the African Union or UN, eminent persons, due to practice, are mostly appointed in an ad hoc situation. They are normally not permanent. I am bringing this kind of outlook as well, knowing for sure that our Community is also running out of resources. We do not have enough money, unless Hon. Musamali and the seconder come up with a modus operandi to either try to convince this Parliament to only mention and identify a number of eminent persons or envoys within our region, be it in South Sudan, Tanzania or Kenya.

Just mentioning them, my colleague from Kenya and a Masai, said that “we have a *laigwanak* all over the place, but they are not paid” because mostly when you appoint an eminent person, there are cost implications to it - salaries, transport, health insurances. You then have to look at it holistically.

I am being persuaded by what you are saying, but let it end. Presidents and Heads of the Summit put it very rightly that it should be only where the need arises. You remember the issue of Migingo; you have talked about it. At that specific time, we should be appointing eminent persons. When it comes to the issue of Lake Victoria, for instance, we should appoint some.

I am only trying to bring logic to Members of Parliament that it should not be permanent, unless - yes, point of information.

Ms Rose Akol (The Republic of Uganda): Thank you, honourable member, for giving way, so that I can give this information.

Mr Speaker, the issue of eminent persons, especially the one Hon. Musamali is talking about, is a creature of the Protocol on Peace and Security. Therefore, it is already provided for under this Protocol and should actually be established. For other eminent persons, we can say not until there is money and all that, but I am sure resources were envisaged by the Council and Summit when this Protocol was established. That is the information I wanted to give you. *(Applause)*

Mr Millya: However much I try to understand what you are saying, I am still on my point that this should come only when there is a conflict either - God forbid - between Tanzania and Kenya. Then at that point, the Presidents and Heads of Summit would sit and form a group of eminent persons to deal with that situation, unless Hon. Musamali comes and says, "We only mention names".

In Tanzania, we have President Kikwete; in Kenya, we have President Uhuru and we are speaking from a very painful background. Remember we had the Peace Fund and all this was embezzled by a group of friends and a few men. *(Laughter)* Please, let us be conscious of what we are trying to do. Those are my few submissions.

Mr Speaker, I am convinced that we should support him but not form a permanent peace and security eminent persons' panel. That will have cost implications in the end. I submit. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. James Millya. It is now Hon. Kadogo.

1.19

Ms Veronica Kadogo (Uganda): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I stand here to support the motion to constitute a panel of EAC eminent persons to facilitate and support peace, and security and manage conflict in the Community.

The reason why I support the motion is that we definitely need peace and you know the importance of peace. It contributes a lot to economic development and political stability in the country. The reason why we need this panel to be consistent is because we definitely need institutional memory.

I differ with my colleague who says that we need a temporary panel. I think we should have a permanent panel, so that it finds lasting solutions to the causes of conflicts, and also always mediates and settles disputes.

Secondly, in relation to that, we need to make good use of the eminent people whom we have in the EAC. For example, whenever we are opening a session in a particular country, we need to call on these eminent people in that country for institutional memory. For example, as we were opening the session in Uganda, we were supposed to invite some important people - the former Speakers, and the former Secretary-General. Those are the people who I am referring to as eminent people in the Community. So, we need this continuous consultation and also continuous guidance.

On the issue of solving the causes of conflicts, I think we also need a panel that will look at these issues in deeper detail. For example, what are the causes of the conflicts and what resolutions can be made so that these conflicts do not recur because the conflicts range from big conflicts like poverty, hunger and boundary misunderstandings to issues of climate change. If the panel is constituted and it is permanent, it will help us to resolve these issues and it will always be referred to rather than making a temporary committee that is not always there to solve the issues of the EAC.

Lastly, I would like to support the motion of Hon. Musamali that we need to constitute a panel of eminent persons to facilitate and support peace and security and manage the conflicts in the Community. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Kadogo. Hon. Clement, we have some noise there but we are finishing. We are reaching the end.

1.24

Mr Clément Musangabatware (Rwanda): Thank you, Rt Hon. Speaker, for this opportunity. I want to raise my voice to support the motion moved by Hon. Paul Musamali, a motion for a resolution of the Assembly urging the Council of Ministers to recommend to the Summit to urgently constitute the panel of EAC eminent persons to facilitate and support peace and security and management of conflict in the Community.

Rt Hon. Speaker, conflict is indeed inevitable in any Community due to different perspectives, interests, values and goals in the communities. The only challenge is the way conflict is handled; the management and the prevention.

The EAC region faces various security challenges including cross-border conflicts, political tensions and insurgencies, and providing an early warning mechanism for conflict could be one of the mandates of the panel of EAC eminent persons. They can also enhance regional unity and solidarity, they can provide neutral and trusted mediation to conflict, they can support capacity building, as well as peace and security.

Given their background and expertise in peace-building and diplomacy, they must be ready to offer guidance and mediate conflict.

Rt Hon. Speaker and honourable members, apart from the persons proposed by Hon. Kadogo, I would also like to give guidance free of charge on the calibre of persons to be members of the panel. I propose former heads of state, former ambassadors and other eminent persons with expertise in peace-building and conflict resolution from our Community.

In conclusion, creating the EAC panel of eminent persons is a proactive measure that would strengthen the region's capacity to address peace and security challenges with a home-grown solution which will provide solutions to the conflict.

For these reasons, once again, I support the motion of Hon. Paul Musamali. Over to you, Rt Hon. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Clément. I will now go to the ex officio members. Hon. SG, you have the floor.

1.27

Ms Veronica Mueni Nduva (The Secretary General, East African Community): Thank you, Mr Speaker and congratulations to Hon. Musamali for a very well-thought-through motion. Again,

I just rise on clarification and insights as to the motion where it captures the issue of being aware of the discussion in 2015. The reason the Summit said on a needs basis was related to the issue that the Summit felt that there was no need for a permanent panel at the time and also due to the prevailing and continued liquidity positions. The Summit guided so.

In essence, it is a good motion and if the Member wishes that this issue is reopened for discussion at Summit then of course it can be conveyed through the Council and the same to be submitted to the Summit for decision making but also to create a context of the funding situation that persistently remains negative. I support. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. SG. Honourable minister, thank you. You have the floor. We are facing some noise on that side but we are finishing.

1.28

Ms Beatrice Askul Moe (The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of East African Community, ASALs and Regional Development): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think I concur with the proposals that have been put in the sense that we may need to take the proposal, having in mind the Summit position of 2015 so that we can be able to see how best to present that to them because it was their decision that is a bit superior to ours so I think this one has room for consultation. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, honourable minister, for being brief. Hon. Musamali -

Mr Musamali: Thank you, Rt Hon. Speaker and Members for the support. Rt Hon. Speaker, I want to thank the Members who were able to get the opportunity to debate and support. Even those who did not get the opportunity to debate, I saw many of you nodding vertically meaning that you are in support. Thank you.

Let me just make a few clarifications, Mr Speaker. On the issue of the amendment proposed by Hon. Amongin, I will not be able to take it following our Rules of Procedure that any amendment should be relevant to the motion. The amendment she was proposing was totally different but it is equally important and it can be covered elsewhere, just like Hon. Siranda alluded.

The same with the amendment by Hon. Gerald Siranda about adding the word “mediation”- If this is done and the panel is established, this will be just one of the terms of reference so it does not have to be put in the motion.

Hon. James was suggesting that we should leave it as temporary as it is. I have a problem with Hon. James Millya because he started by saying that he has the experience of Tanzania which has witnessed peace and sustainability for a long time. What I know about Tanzania is that they have a council of elders, what they call *baraza la wazee*. They exist from the lowest village up to the highest level and Tanzania has witnessed peace and stability for a very long time. It is an island of peace in East Africa.

Now I get paradoxically disturbed when you say that we should not support this when there is already an example. For me, you are suffering from eating too much. When people here eat a lot of food, they belch. You are suffering from belching – *(Interruption)*

Mr Sankok: Mr Speaker, I think Hon. Musamali is out of order for using unparliamentary language and demeaning a colleague Member of Parliament that he is eating so much yet I am a witness that Musamali eats twice as much as Millya eats.

The Speaker: Hon. Musamali –

Mr Musamali: Thank you, Rt Hon. Speaker. Incidentally, he has also used the same language so I do not know but you did not get me well. I did not mean that he eats a lot. I meant that because Tanzania has lived in peace for a long time, it is just like somebody who has eaten a lot of food and then is there - belching is not a bad thing. It is a sign of satisfaction. So I was just saying that my colleague maybe has suffered a lot of satisfaction, you get it.

As Uganda, we have gone through a lot of challenges and not only in Uganda but also the rest of us. In Kenya in 2007/2008, we had to import Kofi Annan all the way from wherever he came from. Simply, what we are talking about is not a game or a joke. That is why I am saying that I will not support – The good thing is that the majority of the Members are supporting that we have it and I want to urge comrade James Millya to join us in supporting the establishment of this.

Lastly, Rt Hon. Speaker, the issue of funds which the Secretary General and Hon. James Millya was talking about. We should not be talking about issues of funds because unless we are hiding our heads in the sand like ostriches, in every Partner State every year, the ombudsmen have been saying Partner States have been losing money to corruption. Let me use the example of Uganda that loses US\$ 10 trillion equivalent to \$30 billion to corruption. This means that if we address issues of corruption, we will be able to save funds here and there and do things that mean a lot to our lives.

You are talking about the temporary measure. You saw what happened to the temporary measure of the peace facility in DRC. The Community provided \$6 million and up to now, we cannot account for it and the matter is before the Legal Committee of the Assembly because of this temporary nature where people can do anything.

We believe that if this panel is reconsidered by the Heads of State and it is established, we can work within the available means, have this – *(Interjection)*- I just beg that I wind up. I was very reluctant that I conclude, kindly.

Mr Millya Kinyasi: Mr Speaker, the money that was embezzled was not due to the ad hoc basis of the committee but rather, financial rules of our Community were not followed. This has to be very clear. And please Hon. Musamali, do not be emotional. We are trying to discuss and bring sense to this Parliament and this Community.

Mr Musamali: I am not emotional because I am allergic to emotions. I cannot be emotional; I will find a way of addressing it.

What I am saying is that all that is coming because of the temporary nature - the issue of rules but if the panel is already there, there will be clear procedures. Someone will not hide behind something else.

Mr Speaker, as East Africans and as humans, we should not hide behind unnecessary excuses. Let us do things to liberate ourselves and I want to leave this issue with the Members. We, the humans who are here on earth and those of us who exist in East Africa, should be proud of God because He created us as humans. We are mammals but He created us as humans and gave us superior brains and a conscience. We are able to think and deduce bad from good, including the issue of addressing conflict.

By the way, if God chose to create any of us into a goat, we would have been eaten already. If we had been created trees, we would be part of the wood which is here. Even if you are a lion, however fierce it is, it cannot live for long. The moment it grows old and cannot hunt, it will die.

So we should thank God that we are superior and we have a conscience. We should use this conscience and brain which God gave us to address our problems. Thank you, Rt Hon. Speaker.

Let me thank the Members who contributed to this motion: Hon. Gideon Gatpan. You fit in the shoes very well and you have brought in a lot of value. Hon. Jacqueline Amongin, Hon. Dr Ole Sankok, Hon. Dr Siranda, Hon. Luke Thomson, Hon. James Millya, Hon. Veronica Kadogo, Hon. Clement Musangabatware, Hon. Secretary General Veronica Nduva, and the Hon. minister, Beatrice Askul Moe, Cabinet Secretary.

Thank you very much, Rt Hon. Speaker, for allowing this motion.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Musamali. I now put the question that this House do recommend to the Council of Ministers to establish an investment – I had gone to my friend’s motion there. Where is your – which page?

Honourable members, I now put the question that this House do urge the Council of Ministers to recommend to the Summit to urgently constitute the Panel of EAC eminent persons to facilitate and support peace and security and the management of conflict in the region.

(Question put and agreed to.)

The Speaker: Honourable members, announcement.

Ms Akol: Thank you, Rt hon. Speaker for giving me this time. I just wanted to request that the honourable ladies Members of Parliament EALA remain behind for a few minutes; about 10 minutes and we conclude on matters to do with establishing the team for netball and other activities that we are going to embark on, especially for the incoming sports agenda that we have for December. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you. (*Applause*) It is good information and from me, for those who were not there at the beginning, we had made our communication. I hope the Chairperson of the Committee on Communication, Trade and Investment (CTI) is around and has followed. Has he gone?

Please, this is very important. These Bills have been delayed and taken years and years. As the ministers are around we should expedite them. So, this afternoon, the Committee on Communication, Trade and Investment should meet the ministers and discuss the Statistics Bureau Bill and the Standards Bill so that tomorrow afternoon we can handle the Statistics Bill if they are ready. The Clerk will communicate.

Secondly, immediately after this meeting, I have a very brief communication to make to the chairpersons of the chapters. They can even follow me in my office. Thank you. With this, I adjourn to tomorrow, Thursday, 7th November, 2024 at 10.00 a.m.

(The Assembly rose at 1.43 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 7 November 2024 at 10.00 a.m.)