

HOUSE OF CONTROVERSIES

EALA MPs review rules in move against Zziwa



Margaret Zziwa has been facing opposition from MPs since March this year.
Picture: File

LAST ELECTIONS

The third East African Legislative Assembly elected Margaret Nantongo Zziwa its first female Speaker on June 5, 2012. Ms Zziwa polled 33 votes against Dora Byamukama's 12 votes. The first round witnessed none of the contestants realising the requisite 30 votes or two-thirds majority as required, with Ms Zziwa scoring 27 votes against Ms Byamukama's 18.

Regional MPs hope to seal Speaker's fate during Tuesday session

By **CHRISTABEL LIGAMI**
Special Correspondent

East African Legislative Assembly members have embarked on a review of the Rules of Procedure in a renewed bid to kick out Margaret Zziwa as their speaker.

They have appointed Ugandan EALA representative Chris Opoka-Okumu to steer the amendment process.

According to Kenyan EALA representative Peter Mathuki, the Assembly has completed the review of most of the 86 rules, including rule 9 that states that members may pass a resolution to remove the Speaker from office.

"We hope to finalise the review on Monday then debate and approve in the House on Tuesday, November 25," said Mr Mathuki.

"With the appointment of a different member to chair the review process, everything is running swiftly and all members are participating," he

added.

The members are going through the rules, proposing changes where they deem necessary. The meeting is also taking into consideration other proposed amendments brought to the fore by the report of Legal, Rules and Privileges Committee. The members are removing the clause stating the number of members needed to sign a motion before it is tabled in the House.

Assembly Rules

Article 60 of EALA Treaty stipulates that the Assembly may make, amend, add to or revoke the rules governing the Assembly.

Among the amendments are for the motion for a resolution to remove the Speaker from office to be signed by at least four elected members from each partner state and to be submitted to the Clerk of the House.

The Clerk shall within 24 hours of receipt of the list of the names forward it to the

House before the motion is tabled in the Assembly within seven days of its receipt by the Clerk; and the House shall refer the motion to the Legal, Rules and Privileges Committee to investigate and report its findings to the Assembly for debate.

The Speaker is entitled to appear in person when the committee is investigating his or her removal if the Assembly passes the motion for the removal of the Speaker by not less than a two-thirds majority of elected members of the Assembly, the Speaker ceases to hold office.

The EALA members are amending the clauses so that the motion for the removal of the Speaker be tabled in the House for debate within 24 hours instead of seven days and that the Speaker will have no mandate to postpone the debate once it starts.

The Rules of Procedure were first adopted by the first Assembly on November 28, 2001. Thereafter, they were amended in 2008, mainly to cater for the expanded membership of the Assembly, following the admission of Burundi and Rwanda.



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Peter Mathuki,
EALA MP