



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**WELCOMING REMARKS BY RT. HON. MARGARET NANTONGO ZZIWA,
SPEAKER OF EALA AT THE ADDRESS BY RT. HON. JUSTIN MUTURI,
SPEAKER OF THE KENYA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY – NOV 18, 2014
NAIROBI, KENYA**

**Rt. Hon Justin Muturi, Speaker of the Kenya National Assembly
Hon. Phyllis Kandie the Chairperson, Council of Ministers of EAC,
The Hon. Ministers and Members of the Council of Ministers,
The Secretary General of the East African Community,
Hon. Members of the East African Legislative Assembly and the
Kenya National Assembly,
Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I wish to first of all thank the Speaker, Rt. Hon. Justin Bedan Njoka Muturi, the Kenya National Assembly and indeed the entire Government of the Republic of Kenya for accepting to host us at the precincts of the Kenya National Assembly once again.

I wish to thank Rt. Hon Muturi for his utmost support towards EALA in particular and the integration process in general. Rt. Hon Muturi continues to be an active Member of the fold of the EAC Speakers' Forum, the politico-

bureau of the Speakers that sits regularly to deliberate on the progress of integration at the EAC. As the Speakers' Forum, we have benefited immensely from his knowledge, advise and experience. Last August, all the Speakers of Parliament of EAC Partner States held their meetings under his Chairmanship. We congratulate him for this achievement.

We laud the Kenya National Assembly for establishing the Committee on Regional Integration which is a very vibrant Committee. It has been instrumental in pushing forward the integration agenda and it closely collaborates with us. I am happy to note that the Speaker continues in his wisdom to prioritize the Committee's business, further attesting to his support for the integration dispensation. I thank you Mr. Speaker for your utmost support and for the dedication, zeal and enthusiasm with which you attach to matters of integration.

I vividly recall that when Rt Hon Muturi took over the mantle of leadership in March 2013, it was at a unique time when the legislature had a fundamental role in enacting legislation aimed at anchoring the (then) newly promulgated Constitution of Kenya. I recall at that point in time when asked of his dreams and aspirations for Kenyans, his response was intelligible and spot on. JB said and I quote:

"As your Speaker, I will do all what is lawfully and humanly possible to facilitate the process of implementing our Constitution, passage of the balance of the governance laws and setting the pace for the sustained economic growth and development of our beloved country, Kenya. That way, without doubt, plenty will be found within our borders" - end of quote.

The 11th Parliament has over the last one and a half years continued to record tremendous progress. The Speaker has fervently preserved the powers, privileges and immunities of this House, without which, optimal performance would have been greatly compromised.

I am further delighted to note that it is during your tenure in the life of Parliament, that you and the Speaker of the Senate, Rt. Hon Ekwe Ethuro, have championed joint participatory approaches by engaging with citizens from all walks of life to enable them to comprehend the work of the legislature. The successful Parliamentary week held sometimes mid this year in July 2014, is a true testimony to that move. In many ways, you have succeeded in demystifying the notion of Parliament thus positioning it as an institution where every Kenyan is represented and their voice heard. This is definitely commendable.

I have noted that Rt. Hon Muturi is keen to carry on with the reforms of his predecessor and go a step ahead to better the same. A good example is found in the operations of the House where Speaker Muturi has encouraged the use of technology when debating and through electronic voting. This is for good measure in this era of digitization!

The relations between the Kenya National Assembly and EALA are cordial and at an all time high. I am proud that both Assemblies continue and collectively learn from each other as they build ties across the Community.

The relations cut across in many sectors in legislative work, Committees and even in the Inter-Parliamentary Games.

Rt Hon Muturi has graciously offered us the use of Parliament's facilities over the next two weeks and we are truly grateful for his warm gesture and magnanimity. At the moment, we are aware that the KNA and the Senate are both in session. I lack the right words to indeed fully describe such generosity of spirit. Perhaps the words of **Marlene Dietrich**, a singer and poet who in 1901 said: **Its' the friends you can call up at 4 a.m. that matter** may come close to what Rt. Hon Muturi has done. Or better still, the words of Henry David Thoreau an American author and Philosopher, who once said **"The language of Friendship is not words, but meanings.**

I have to thank the Speaker for exhibiting this sign of true friendship and commitment to EALA.

Despite the official person of Rt. Hon Muturi, his radiant personality and heart-warming simplicity speaks volumes. On the reverse side of the coin and in line with his extensive legal and legislative expertise, the Honorable Speaker has demonstrated and made numerous presentations on leadership, democracy, conflict management and peace keeping both on local and international fora. One could say so much about the Speaker – Perhaps let me keep the rest for another occasion.

With these few remarks, I now take this opportunity to invite the Rt. Hon. Justin Muturi, Speaker of the Kenya National Assembly to make his remarks.

November 18, 2014