



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**WELCOMING SPEECH BY RT. HON. (DR) MARGARET
NANTONGO ZZIWA, SPEAKER OF EALA AT THE ADDRESS
OF RT.HON DONATILE MUKABALISA, SPEAKER OF THE
PARLIAMENT OF RWANDA CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES,
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2014, KIGALI, RWANDA**

**Rt. Hon. Bernard Makuza, President of Rwanda Senate
Rt. Hon. Mukabalisa Donatile, Speaker of Rwanda
Chamber of Deputies;
Hon Phyllis Kandie, Chairperson, EAC Council of Ministers;
The Secretary General of the EAC;
Hon. Members of EALA and Chamber of Deputies and
Senators;
Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen:**

I wish first of all to thank the Rt. Hon. Donatile Mukabalisa, Speaker of Rwanda Chamber of Deputies, the entire Parliament and indeed the entire Government of the Republic of Rwanda for accepting to host us here at the Parliament of Rwanda once again.

I congratulate Rt. Hon Mukabalisa for her election to the position of Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies exactly one year ago. At this juncture, I also take the earliest opportunity to warmly

congratulate Senator Bernard Makuza following his recent election as President of the Rwanda Senate. Your victory reflects the confidence and able leadership that the Rwanda Senate has in you. I am sure under your leadership, the Senate will forge ahead.

Allow me in the same vein to thank the Rt. Hon Rose Mukantabana, Speaker *Emeritus* of the Chamber of Deputies, for the support she rendered to the EALA fraternity during her tenure of service. I congratulate Parliament of Rwanda for electing Rt. Hon Mukabalisa to take over as the second Woman Speaker in Rwanda and that makes us proud as women. This also speaks volumes on the position of Rwanda Government towards empowerment of women.

Rt Hon Speaker, Hon Members;

The relations between Parliament of Rwanda and EALA are very cordial. I consider the gesture of surrendering the use of the precincts of Parliament to EALA over the two week period to be one of pure friendship and warmth. We as EALA are truly grateful for the spirit of sisterhood and look forward to strengthening and solidifying the relations further.

I am also proud that both Assemblies continue to collectively learn from each other and we build ties across the Community.

I take the opportunity to warmly welcome Rt. Hon Mukabalisa to the EAC Speakers' Bureau. Rt. Hon Mukabalisa has already attended one of the meetings of the Bureau that took place in August 2014, in Nairobi, Kenya.

I am sure that we shall in many ways benefit from the experience of Rt. Hon Mukabalisa as we strengthen the Speakers' Bureau

which is the umbrella body through which the National Assemblies spearhead and intensify the linkages of EALA and the National Assemblies as stipulated in Article 49 (2) and 65 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community.

In the short time that we have worked together, I have found Rt. Hon Mukabalisa to be engaging, amiable, and co-operative. I admire you for your leadership style and political philosophy.

I am confident that under your leadership, the Parliament of Rwanda shall make significant achievements and that its role of the Legislature, Oversight and Representative shall be strengthened. As the Presiding Officer of the House, you will definitely oversee the Parliament institute far reaching reforms both in the short term and in future to make the Legislature more effective in service delivery to the citizens.

Rt. Hon Speaker, Hon Members;

I am informed that within the one-year period; Parliament has seen an expedited legislative process of several bills. Since October 2013, when the Lower Chamber was sworn in, it has received 60 Bills of which 54 have been scrutinised and 41 of them, passed and published in the Official Gazette, representing 95 per cent of performance execution by the legislature.

This has been a busy year but one that is by all means successful. The business you have executed is commendable. The passion with which you want Rwandans to understand how Parliament works, and what the responsibilities of the lawmakers are is admirable. I can only wish Rt. Hon Mukabalisa my unreserved support and success in the coming years.

Over the coming two-weeks here, the Assembly will conduct the following notable business for consideration:

- debate the EAC Co-operatives Bill, 2014 (2nd & 3rd Reading);
- receive and consider reports from various Committees of the Assembly. Such Reports include the Committee on Regional Affairs and Conflict Resolution, the Report of the Committee on Legal Rules and Privileges. The Report of the Committee on the Communications, Trade and Investment specifically on the Implementation of the Single Customs Territory on the Central Corridor.
- consider several Motions and Questions brought before the House.

The Plenary shall be followed by the eighth Inter-Parliamentary Relations Seminar, commonly referred to as the Nanyuki Series. The Seminar themed: **Insecurity and Terrorism as threats to EAC integration: How can EAC develop a Common Position?** takes place on October 31st, 2014 to November 2, 2014. The Nanyuki Series brings together over 100 Parliamentarians from EALA and the EAC Partner States' Parliaments.

Rt. Hon Speaker, Hon Members

I consider it imperative that we strengthen relations between the sister Parliaments even further as envisaged by Article 65 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the EAC. The Clerk of both Assemblies are now in constant touch and the EALA Clerk transmits records of all debates to his counterpart at the Chamber of Deputies. The dispatch of such copies is also now made available to to you Rt. Hon. Speakers; and to the Chairpersons of the respective EAC/Regional Integration Committees. The same procedure is applied when it comes to the dissemination of draft Bills for consideration.

In this regard and in order to strengthen integration, I wish to request for your indulgence Rt. Hon Speaker in allocation of more time for the EAC integration policies and matters to enable Parliamentarians to debate and make an input to integration matters.

Sensitization is key in furthering integration so under our Strategic Plan (2013-2018), EALA's intends to target key stakeholders including Parliamentarians. At an appropriate time Madam Speaker, I shall be reaching out to you with a specific request for you to set aside a day or two for EALA to interface and debate comprehensively on matters of EAC with Members of the Chamber of Deputies.

The annual Inter-Parliamentary Games Tournament is another avenue by which our Parliaments relate. We thank the Speakers' Bureau for the support of this activity which is in line with sensitization of the publics. This year, EALA shall be hosting the Games in Arusha. You are all most welcome. I am pleased that Parliament of Rwanda shall again be fielding a football team. Last year, the team finished third and I am sure you are preparing hard to capture the trophy. But I want to assure you on a lighter note that it shall not be very easy. For one, EALA shall have the benefit of playing on home turf and it shall as usual field a very strong team. In addition to netball, we shall also be introducing two new disciplines: Tug of War and Athletics. We look forward to your full participation at the event.

With these few remarks, I now take this opportunity to invite my colleague and sister, the Rt. Hon. Mukabalisa, Speaker of the Rwanda Chamber of Deputies to make her remarks.

Karibu Mheshimiwa Spika