

- **The Right Honourable Pie NTAVYOHANYUMA, Speaker of Burundi National Assembly,**
- **The Right Honourable Gabriel NTISEZERANA, Speaker of Burundi Senate,**
- **The Right Honourable Margaret Nantongo ZZIWA, Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA);**
- **Your Excellency, Bernard BUSOKOZA, First Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi;**
- **Your Excellency, Gervais RUFYIKIRI, Second Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi;**
- **Your Excellency, Mohammed RUKARA, Ombudsman of Burundi;**
- **Your Excellencies, Former Heads of State of Burundi;**
- **Honourable Members of EALA and the Parliament of Burundi;**
- **Honourable Shem BAGEINE, Minister of East African Community of Uganda and Chairperson of the East African Community Council of Ministers;**
- **Honourable Ministers and Members of the Council of Ministers of the East African Community (EAC);**
- **Ambassador Dr. Richard SEZIBERA, East African Community Secretary General ;**
- **Distinguished Ministers;**
- **Mister President of the Supreme Court of Burundi;**
- **Misters the Chiefs of Civil and Police Staff at the Office of the President;**
- **High Officials of Judiciary ;**
- **Mister Judge to the EAC Court;**
- **Senior officers of the Defense and Security Forces**
- **Your Excellencies Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Heads of Missions and International Organizations;**
- **Mister the Mayor of the City of Bujumbura**
- **Distinguished Guests;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen;**

1. First and foremost, allow me to praise the Lord who has brought us together to this important gathering.

2. On behalf of the People and Government of Burundi and on my own behalf, I would like to extend a warm welcome to you all, on the occasion of **"the Second Meeting of the Second Session of the Third East African Legislative Assembly"**.

3. I would like to welcome the Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly, **the Right Honourable Margaret Nantongo ZZIWA** and all of you, Honorable Members of the East African Legislative Assembly from East African Community Partner States, and brothers and sisters of Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania. Have a pleasant stay and feel at home in Burundi. Welcome. Karibuni Saana. Kaze.

4. On my part, I personally, my Government and the People of Burundi, we can assure you that we will spare no effort to make your stay in Burundi both useful and enjoyable.

5. Before I go any further, I would like to extend my heartfelt condolences and support to the government and the People of Kenya, following the recent terrorist attack that claimed 67 lives in Nairobi. Our thoughts and prayers are with you brothers and sisters of Kenya. For those loved ones who lost their lives during the Nairobi mall attack, let us stand up and pay tribute with a moment of silence. **(After a short moment....Thank you)**

6. I am pleased to welcome the Honorable Members of Parliament of Burundi, Members of the Government of Burundi, Members of the Diplomatic Corps and Consular Missions who are here, and all of you, Distinguished guests, who have agreed to grace with your presence the solemn opening of the Second Meeting of the Second Session of the Third East African Legislative Assembly.

Honourable,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen;

7. Holding the Second Meeting of the Second Session of the Third East African Legislative Assembly in Burundi is a great honour to my country. It indeed gives the People of Burundi an opportunity to follow closely, and understand the functioning of the Organs and Institutions of the Community in general, and the EALA in particular.

8. In doing so, and more to the mandate conferred by Article 49 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community, EALA definitely works with Burundi National Assembly on matters relating to the Community. I do commend EALA for its performance.

9. I take this opportunity to express my satisfaction over the decision of rotating the East African Community Meetings in all Partner States.

Honourable,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen;

10. This Session comes at a time when Burundi is ending its one year term as Rapporteur of the Community. I highly appreciate the support of the Partner States while exercising this Community commitment and mandate. I have noted that there is a need to focus more on implementation of EAC projects and programmes, and the Common Market in particular. It is imperative that the Council of Ministers and legislators work on this, in view to make the difference for our respective countries and the People we represent and stand for.

11. It is equally important that we tell our People what the Community is up to, and be able to track progress about the integration agenda, and also to share best practices between countries. In Burundi, we have just completed an awareness campaign in all the country provinces on the integration process within the East African Community, in order to inform People on the steps and stakes of integration, the projects and programmes, as well as tangible benefits of joining the East African Community.

12. It is my strong conviction that we can consolidate our integration and move to even higher stages of integration. I am informed that negotiations on the Protocol on the Monetary Union are almost over, and it is planned that the East Africa Memorandum of Understanding Protocol under review will be signed at the next Ordinary Summit of East African Community Heads of State in November 2013.

I do believe that we can accelerate the Political Federation, a federation to which the Burundian population and the other Partner States have overwhelmingly responded positively.

Honourable,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen;

13. While we commit ourselves to the integration agenda, it is our duty to strengthen peace and security within our Community, so as to be able to answer the queries of our national economic operators and various stakeholders. I firmly believe that all that is good for economic operators is especially good for Burundi, and good for the East African Community in general.

14. In our vision, EAC is a community of common destiny for a sustainable economic and social development in an environment of peace and security for all. We have got to believe in the Community with indeed one People. Whatever we undertake, and whatever we do, this motto must be the corner stone and building block.

15. With this in mind, there is no doubt that the integration agenda will move ahead for the benefit and well-being of our respective countries and Peoples.

Honourable,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen;

16. I am informed that there is a heavy agenda for this Second Meeting of the Second Session of the Third East African Legislative Assembly. Therefore I would like to wish Members of EALA fruitful deliberations.

17. There is no doubt that they shall come up with resolutions and recommendations that, if implemented, shall make the difference for our Peoples.

18. It is with this conviction that I solemnly declare open the Second Meeting of the Second Session of the Third East African Legislative Assembly.

Long live and prosperity to the East African Community,

Long live our Parliaments and East African Legislative Assembly,

God Bless you all, Thank you very much, Asante sana, Murakoze cane.