



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**WELCOMING REMARKS BY HON. ABDIRAHIN H. ABDI, SPEAKER
OF EALA AT THE STATE OF EAC ADDRESS TO EALA BY H.E. PIERRE
NKURUNZIZA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI AND
CHAIRPERSON OF THE SUMMIT OF EAC HEADS OF STATE,
TUESDAY 5TH APRIL, 2011**

Your Excellency, Pierre Nkurunziza, President of the Republic of Burundi and
Chairperson of the Summit of EAC Heads of State;
H.E President of the Rwanda Senate;
Chairperson, EAC Council of Ministers;
Hon. Ministers;
Hon. Members of Parliament and EALA;
Your Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is with great honour that I take this opportunity to welcome Your
Excellency to deliver to this Assembly the State of the Community Address
in your capacity as the Chairperson of the Summit of the EAC Heads of
State.

Your Excellency, let me also take this belated opportunity to very warmly congratulate you for assuming this exciting and challenging office of Chairperson of Summit.

You have taken leadership of the Community during a very important and sensitive stage of the integration process i.e. the Customs Union is fully operational; we are in process of operationalization of the Common Market Protocol; and the fusion of the Partner States' monetary and fiscal policies. The on-going negotiations towards the EAC Monetary Union will no doubt be the highlight of your tenure of office.

I am confident that with your wise counsel and leadership, this third and crucial level of the integration process will succeed and the Community shall be able to meet its set deadlines.

The people of East Africa have patiently waited and urged their leaders on as they weave through the complex processes of bringing the hitherto disparate economies together.

The EAC Monetary Union is the Marquee stage of the integration process. After the complex negotiations and boardroom trade-ins, we are confident that the people of East Africa shall be able to hold a **SINGLE CURRENCY** of the Community and stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of very few other Regional Economic Communities who have been able to attain this fete; never mind the huge economic gains that shall accompany that development.

Your Excellency, let me also take this opportunity to congratulate you and your government for keeping the peace in your country since the last elections. It is our prayer as a people of the region that your continued wise and pragmatic leadership will continue watering the tree of peace in Burundi and lay the foundation for democratic governance.

I would like once again to thank your government for your continued intervention in the situation in Somalia. The decision of your Government and that of the Republic of Uganda to volunteer troops to the African Union Mission to Somali was indeed very foresighted. That your country, having barely recovered from war, has been able to send peace keeping troops to Somalia through AMISOM is evidence of your desire to see to it that this region and Africa in general attains meaningful peace for its people. For our East African region to be peaceful and prosperous, we must ensure that there is peace in our neighbouring countries. Otherwise, if we do not take concrete measures the gains of our integration may never be realized.

Your Excellency, we therefore look forward to your leadership of the Community, and we pray that you succeed in all you plans that you have during your tenure of office.

Your Excellency, it is now my humble duty and honour to welcome you to address this August Assembly.

KARIBU MHESHIMIWA RAIS.