



BY RT. HON. MARGARET N. ZZIWA – SPEAKER EALA

Ladies & Gentlemen of the Press

Thank you for attending this media briefing. Let me at the outset introduce myself. I am Margaret Nantongo Zziwa, the Speaker of the 3rd East African Legislative Assembly, duly elected on June 5, 2012 to steer the Assembly over the next five years. Accompanying me are a number of legislators whom I shall ask to quickly introduce themselves.

I wish to take the opportunity to notify you of the 2nd Meeting of the 1st Session of the 3rd Assembly scheduled to take place here at the Kenya National Assembly from today, September 3rd 2012 until September 14th, 2012.

On behalf of the Assembly and on my own behalf, allow me to salute His Excellency, Mwai Kibaki, President of the Republic of Kenya and current Chair of the Summit of EAC Heads of State, the Government and the citizens of the Republic of Kenya for accepting to host EALA. We thank President Kibaki, the Chair of the EAC Summit for accepting to address us tomorrow, September 4th, 2012 at 2 pm.

EALA salutes and appreciates the wise and able leadership of President Kibaki in steering Kenya and the EAC to greater heights.

We thank our host, the Speaker of the Kenya National Assembly, Rt. Hon Kenneth Marende for

granting us access to the Parliament and for extending to us the use of various facilities to EALA for this Meeting.

Since our inauguration, Members of the Assembly have participated in two induction exercises to impart the necessary skills to enable us carry out our mandate more effectively. At the same time, the various Committees of EALA have already commenced their work. We anticipate that the 3rd Assembly shall likewise increase and enhance its focus on oversight of EAC programmes and projects to ensure that the Community remains on track.

Over the two-weeks, the Assembly shall thus conduct the following business:

- Will receive Reports of the following Committees of EALA:
 - 1) The Committee on Accounts
 - 2) The Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources
 - 3) The Committee on General Purpose,
 - 4) Committee on Communications, Trade and Investment
 - 4) The Committee on Regional Affairs and Conflict Resolution
 - 5) The Committee on Legal, Rules and Privileges

- Will debate the Report of the Committee on Communications, Trade and Investment on Consultation between Inter-Parliamentary bodies on Trade related policies. The Consultation took place last week in Kigali, Rwanda

- Will pose questions to the Council of Ministers, debate and adopt various Committee Reports, Motions and Resolutions.

We wish to emphasize that the 3rd Assembly shall seek to consolidate on the gains of the 2nd Assembly whose successes were notable. We shall in particular the (1) pass of Bills, (2) strengthening the Assembly by taking it closer to the people and continued representation of the citizens of the EAC. It is only fair at this juncture to thank my colleagues, the Members of the 2nd Assembly under Speaker Emeritus, Rt. Hon Abdirahin Abdi for their efforts in ensuring EALA meets its mandate. Beyond that, the 3rd Assembly shall endeavour to pass relevant legislation key to integration. It is during our tenure that the region shall witness the entry of the Monetary Union as a third pillar of integration, and initial steps towards the Political Federation.

We are cognizant of the fact that despite the implementation of the first pillars of integration – the Customs Union and the Common Market, a number of challenges in implementation continue to be felt.

Some of such include the bottlenecks faced in doing business including several Non Tariff Barriers (NTBs), and the slow-uptake of the agenda of the EAC in the national policy networks. It is however pleasing to note that following the Meeting of the EAC Speakers' Bureau held in

Kigali in May 2012, all National Assemblies in the region have agreed to establish specific Committees dealing with matters of regional integration or assign some desirable amount of time towards discussing the same to existing Committees in their respective Parliaments. This shall see the National Assemblies deliberate more keenly and pronounce themselves on matters of the integration.

We as the Assembly shall continue collaborating with the Council of Ministers and all other stakeholders in carrying out of our mandate as stipulated by the Treaty to ensure the EAC economic bloc is strengthened. In the same vein, we are urging the Council of Ministers to be vigilant in bringing more Bills this time around to the House for deliberation. In the 2nd Assembly, other than the Appropriation Bills, the House only received 9 Bills from the Council of Ministers with the rest – brought as Private Members' Bills. I am glad that the Council of Ministers has taken it upon itself to seriously consider initiating more Bills this time round.

Finally, I appeal to the media as the Fourth Estate to follow up keenly and cover our proceedings during this period and to disseminate the necessary information to the various sections of the highlighting the benefits out of the integration, publics and propagating the regional integration process.

I thank you for listening to me.

END

September 3, 2012